

THE PROBLEMS OF THE TOWN CHURCH

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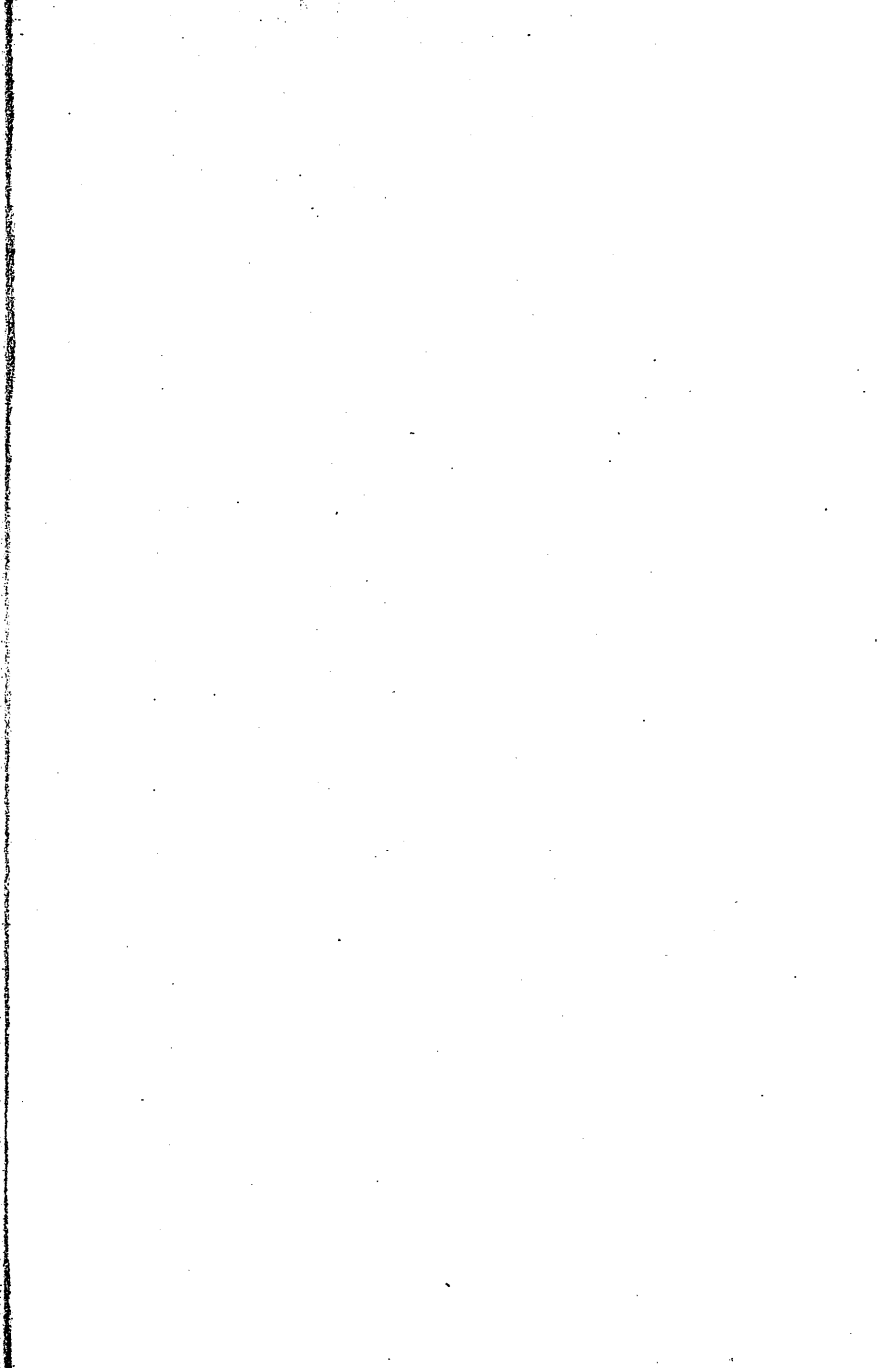
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Problems of the Town Church of

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A DISCUSSION OF NEEDS AND METHODS

BY

GEORGE A. MILLER, B.A.



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PREFACE

The dawn of the twentieth century comes with new emphasis of the fact that the church is in a transition period. We have lost the momentum of the old before we have caught the swing of the new. That no large gains of membership have appeared in such a period is not strange; that no general upheaval or ecclesiastical revolution is imminent is reason for thanksgiving.

In the oncoming of new conditions the city has felt the pressure first, and the struggle for readjustment is there most evident. In the churches of the towns and country the transformation is largely in the future, but cannot be long delayed. To-day the spirit and methods of the nineteenth century are yet operative in the town, and their failure to solve the problems of the case is seen in a state of lethargy and indifference rather than in an active breaking away from the church.

The more sharply drawn situation of the city has attracted so much attention that the town has been partly lost sight of. Yet three-fourths of the churches of America are in towns of eight thousand inhabitants or less, and seventy-five per cent of pastors must always labor in these town churches.

PREFACE

The purpose of this work is to call attention to the necessity for scientific study of the special needs of the church in the town. The methods of the city church do not succeed, and the failure of the city-man in the town is proverbial.

The importance of emphasizing the need of a greater baptism of the Holy Spirit cannot be overestimated; but when such a baptism comes it will do in the twentieth century what it has done in every other century—be the immediate cause of a new growth of methods, adapted to the needs at hand. Granted a storehouse of Infinite Power from which to draw for saving the world, the methods of its application to the needs of men are of greatest importance.

The problems of the church in the town are, in a representative sense, the problems of the church at large. Yet the several excellent handbooks of methods published within the past few years are almost wholly useless in any but city churches. In collecting material for this work, over five hundred pastors were requested to furnish any plans that had succeeded in their own work. Over one-half of this number were unable to mention any specific methods, but appeared to rely on "Gospel preaching," "earnestness," "the power of the Spirit," or other means, indefinite and general in character. From a few came the assurance that methods were useless—"power" was what was needed. It is noteworthy, however, that many of the men whose work as pastors is an

unqualified success, responded with excellent suggestions and hearty approval of the work undertaken. To these the author is indebted for much valuable material.

It may appear to some that the discussion of these methods does not enter sufficiently into detail. To this may be said that it is not the purpose of this work to furnish ready-made methods, for the reason that such rarely succeed. The man who has any possible chance of success must make his own methods to fit the peculiar needs of his own work; but in so doing the hints gained from methods that have succeeded elsewhere may be of highest value. If this handbook may serve as a collection of such hints and call attention to the pressing needs and widening opportunities of the church in the town, it will fulfill the mission whereunto it is sent.

FRESNO, CALIFORNIA.



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The Town Church

CHAPTER I

THE TOWN

The town still exists, though, in the cityward drift of population, it is in danger of being lost sight of. The city, with its one-third of the total population, has made so much smoke and noise that we sometimes fail to perceive that the other two-thirds of the people are now, and for some time will continue to be, centered in and about the towns and villages of the country. While the city has made rapid growth, the town has at least held its own; and, so long as it represents such a large majority, it must, by reason of sheer numbers alone, be reckoned with in any accounting of social forces.

The United States census of 1900 reports 550 cities of 8,000 or more inhabitants each, representing a total of 25,000,000. Extending the term "city" to include places of 4,000 or more inhabitants does not materially affect the per cent of population, for the reason that while 3,000,000 more inhabitants are thus included, many towns have a population of over 8,000. The whole use of the term is relative, and no exact line can be drawn between

Census
returns.

cities and towns on the basis of population. Some places show essential city conditions with a population of 5,000; others are towns, with 25,000. Of towns, villages and cross-roads containing a population of less than 8,000, there are in round numbers 10,000 in the United States, representing a total population of 50,000,000 people.

The geographical distribution of this population, classed as "rural," is shown by the following table, arranged according to groups of states:

**Geograph-
ical distri-
bution.**

North Atlantic States.....	41%	"rural"
South Atlantic States.....	83%	"
North Central States	70%	"
South Central States	89%	"
Western States.....	69%	"
United States.....	66%	"

The New England division alone, the smallest in area, shows a majority of population in the cities, due probably to the large manufacturing industries of these states. Leaving this section out of account, the average of non-city population for the rest of the country is 77 per cent, or more than three-fourths of the whole, who are not dwellers in cities.

Further, the relative rate of increase of population in the cities is decreasing. The decade 1880-

1890 showed two-thirds of the total increase to be in the cities, while the 1890-1900 period showed a gain of 6,736,000 in the cities against an increase of

**Rural
increase.**

6,374,000 in the towns and country, or almost one-half of the whole. There are many evidences that indicate that the first decade of the twentieth century will show a further relative gain in the ratio of increase of town and country population. In the nature of the case the larger cities must touch the limit of rapid increase and come to a comparative standstill.

Again, sooner or later, there must be a return to rural life as the fundamental supply, not only of bread and meat, but of natural conditions of living. The city will not and cannot move out into the country. But for the densely overcrowded districts of the larger cities, there must be, eventually, an outlet somewhere; and, if not into the virgin fields and unoccupied territory of our hills and valleys, where, then, shall it be found? The city will continue to increase, but the increase of the town and country population in the next score of years will be more than equal to that of the centers of population.

But the American town is representative in a broader sense than that of mere numbers. If we

look about for the most natural, simple, truly "American" life of to-day—the "normal" life, if there is any such thing—we shall find it in the towns. The great middle classes—the mechanics, artisans and small business men; the men in the professions—are in the city at a disadvantage between the

**Return to
rural life.**

**The town
representative.**

upper and nether millstones of the "Four Hundred" and the "Submerged Tenth." But in the town these classes are in the majority. Self-respecting, intelligent, industrious, they are the great social balance-wheel of the nation. Private enterprise is here little affected by the great corporation and the department store. Private initiative is unfettered by restrictive combinations. Here is to be found the type of citizen that has made our country what it is to-day, and that is yet to save us from extremes of class differentiation. In the midst of overstrained conditions between capital and labor and the general whirl of rapidly changing conditions, public safety depends largely on the cohesion of this class of American citizens.

The town is the natural center for all non-city population. Through its postoffice, stores, and political machinery, every citizen is reached in all parts of the township and county, and every commercial traveler understands the true importance of the town as the strategic point in a fruitful field.

The town is a feeder for the city. A constant stream of population has been flowing cityward and some of the human waters of the stream show need of improvement at the source. If the fountain can be cleansed it will prevent the addition of filth to the city marsh below.

Such are the towns of America with their fifty

**Town a
center.**

**Feeder
for city.**

million people and their growing possibilities for social improvement and human salvation. A riper field for the harvest the old earth has never seen.

CHAPTER II

THE CHURCH IN THE TOWN

The mission of the church in the town is exactly identical with its mission anywhere else. Apart from man's well-being there exists no mission for any mundane institution, and the magnificent mission of the church is to find men and bring them to God—a mission as deep as the needs of men and as broad as the goodness of God. The sole test of the efficiency of any method is the extent to which it accomplishes the mission of the church. The only condemnation that is final is that the methods do not save men. And what is the church of the town doing to save the town? Every worker must develop his own answer—but how many of us are busy with turning the wheel of the established way of doing things, all the while lamenting that somehow men do not come to the shrine that we have set up in a church closed six days of the week! The men are too busy; we are also busy, and we have but to open our eyes to see the curious spectacle of the church and the world side by side, each so intent on its own doings that neither heeds the other nor stops long enough to inquire the reason why.

The city church is indeed discovering that if it is to save itself from perishing from off the earth,

it must do what Jesus did—go where men are and find them in daily life, the meanwhile casting form and ceremony and established customs to the winds, unless they serve as direct aids to the supreme work of finding men and bringing them to God. We shall never see the church a spiritual dynamo in the town till we pause in our zeal for established methods and turn the whole machinery of the church “about-face” toward men. Then shall we fall to the study of the conditions of town life, the needs of town men and women, and, through the presence of a risen Lord, out of it shall come a greater Town Church.

And now for the facts. All that has been said of the town applies with cumulative force to the church in the town. Almost eighty per cent of the churches of the country to-day are located in towns of less than eight thousand inhabitants, and about four pastors out of every five are in charge of town churches. This one fact would seem sufficient to establish the importance of the church in the town, for no class containing four-fifths of the whole can be set aside in a search for a representative church.

But the town church is representative in a broader sense. The most striking denominational characteristics, the sources from which the majority of the ministry is drawn, the prevailing impressions and dominant tone of the church at large—these are

**Four-fifths
of all
churches
are in towns.**

**Town
church rep-
resentative.**

determined mainly by the better class of town churches.

Then the church in the town stands next to the representative American of to-day; certainly a position of great opportunity. If we can evangelize this "average man," then we have a middle ground on which to stand—a class of workers whose lives may reach the indifferent rich on one side and the degraded poor on the other. There is no agency to-day so near the great common people who heard Jesus so gladly, and among whom He spent His life, as the church standing in the midst of a village full of such people. That these people are not remarkable for their moral or spiritual fruitfulness is true enough, but they are the great heart of the American people to-day; and we, who stand next to them, must carry the gospel to them or they will sink both themselves and us in the maelstrom of a nation that knows not God.

If the town is the life stream of the city, then the church, standing at this fountain-head, certainly has the opportunity to purify the sources of the stream. The work actually done in this direction has been so far one of the great agencies counteracting the vicious tendencies of the large foreign immigration of the baser sort into the cities.

The church in the town is as much a natural center as the postoffice or the courthouse. Its methods and motives may exert a vastly greater

**Stands
nearest the
people.**

**Purify the
fountain.**

influence on the life of the town than do those of the city church on the complex and intense conditions of city life. The church in the town measures a considerable arc in the circle of civic life, and when alive can make itself felt throughout the community. To revolutionize the town church means to revolutionize the town, so far as its members carry the fire from the altar into the street, the store and the home.

Town church a natural center.

In the face of all this and more (see Chapter V) the town church to-day is the most neglected part of the whole field. Great advance

A neglected field.

has come in methods during the past half century, but the improvements have all been limited almost wholly to the city churches. Four-fifths of all literature on the subject of methods of church work will apply to conditions existing in one-fifth only of our churches. City evangelization is at least aware of the need of twentieth-century methods to meet existing conditions, but in the towns we lumber along in the ox-carts in which our fathers rode.

True enough, the casual observer will count the church spires in the average town and remark that there seems to be no apparent neglect

Remedy not in restricting denominational competition.

of attempts to occupy the field. That there is a sinful crowding of churches of different names in small towns no one will deny, and that some interdenominational principles for the regulation of this

matter should be speedily arranged is imperative for the mere maintaining of a decent front to the enemy, but this is not the problem before us. What we need is not *fewer* churches nearly so much as *better* churches. The mere removal of one or two not needed, or prevention of a useless increase of organizations will in itself never solve the problems of the town church. Nor will an ideal union of effort remove the great crying need of a church that will make the Gospel a mighty regenerative force throughout the entire life of the community. The spectacle of six or seven churches in a community that has not enough people to fill them all at one time, is bad enough, but a far worse sight is that of such a town with those churches all closed six-sevenths of the time while saloon, gambling-house and dance-hall never close their doors of infamy and sin.

There is an astonishing ignorance of the importance and needs of the church in the town; and that, too, on the part of men who are supposed to possess a comprehensive knowledge of the church at large.

**Ignorance
of the
needs of
the town
church.**

Editors of church papers, professors in theological schools, college presidents, and bishops have all protested to the author their ignorance of the subject in a manner that showed that they regarded the church in the town as a small and unimportant corner in the field. That city pastors should be best informed concerning their own work is to be expected; but it often hap-

pens that in the city church there is an air of patient tolerance if not outright prejudice toward the church in the smaller town. The value and importance of the work is thought to be about in proportion to the number of inhabitants in the place where the church is situated. The town pastor is regarded in a patronizing spirit that thinks him a "good man, but of course not up to *our* pastor." In a Western city of one hundred thousand people, a certain church of a couple of hundred members was hopelessly in debt and about to be sold therefor. In the effort made to save the property the remark was made and applauded "that it is more important to save this church than to build a hundred churches in country towns."

The crying need in the town to-day is for a careful and scientific study of the conditions of the problems presented. A generation of live men who will consecrate themselves to the application of remedies devised in the light of such study and in the power of an Indwelling Holy Spirit, and to the leading forth of the triumphs of the town church, would be a rich reward. A spirit of false loyalty to established customs has caused much timidity in devising methods born of the immediate needs. Occasionally some man scores great success with the methods in time-honored use, and we all aspire, rightly, to go and do likewise, forgetting that such men will succeed with almost

**Need of
study of the
field.**

any legitimate methods. Nor will the adoption of the "methods-born-of-needs" principle lead to radical and demoralizing departures from established ways of doing. What it will do will be to infuse new life and power into the old and bring forth the new when needed to meet new-forming conditions of life.

It is often alleged that the church of the town is not loyal to the general interests of the church, and the accusation is well founded.

**Not loyal to
general
interests of
the church.**

Nor is it strange that it is so. All the town ever hears of these connectional interests is what comes through an appeal for money to support the "various benevolent enterprises of the church." The city church is occasionally visited by bishops, secretaries, editors, college presidents and others, while all the country cousin knows of these men and their work he hears from the pastor, or reads in the church paper, if, perchance, he ever sees one. Occasionally some enterprising pastor secures an address from some general church official for his town church and is everywhere complimented for his cunning and perseverance in landing so large a fish in so small a boat.

We must revise our entire conception of the importance and possibilities of the nearly eighty per cent of churches located in towns, before we shall ever succeed in the problems now so earnestly pressing for solution.

CHAPTER III

CONDITIONS OF THE PROBLEM

There are five conditions peculiar to the town that affect most strongly the town church. No church can ignore these and fulfill its mission to the people in and about it.

First. The town lacks the broad and effective means of culture found in the larger cities. Public libraries and reading-rooms, musical societies, art associations and self-improvement clubs are regarded as luxuries for those who have nothing more "practical" to attend to. The old debating society is found only in the outer school districts, and a Young Men's Christian Association can rarely be supported in a town of less than about ten thousand people. The popular lecture course, now reviving, has been nearly smothered by the ten-cent magazine, which is often an educator of doubtful value. That these things are lacking in the town we cannot deny.

On the other hand, the list of demoralizing agencies is, in its way, quite equal to that of the city. The saloon is everywhere and always at it. The cigar store gambling-house is in every town. The dive is not quite so open and noisy as in the city, but is all the more

**Town lacks
culture
facilities.**

**Demoraliz-
ing agen-
cies.**

deadly in its work of ensnaring young men. The town hall, or "opera house," exhibits an annual program of low-priced shows of the most demoralizing sort—and, be it known, "everybody goes." The downtown corner serves as a "hanging-out" place, reeking with physical and moral filth, and the boys of the town lounge about, absorbing the uncleanness.

It is not strange that the average town church shares this lack of culture facilities. The church building is often neat and attractive, but in point of furnishing cannot cope with the town saloon. The inspiring effect of the noble and majestic is absent. Stained windows and pipe-organs are rare, carpets and upholstery are luxuries. Here we may turn pessimist, if so inclined; but if we turn the telescope the right end to, we may see the church's opportunity and learn her mission to supply the people with many of the means of culture that are lacking, and to so saturate these with the spirit of the living Christ that they may become a door into the more abundant life of the Gospel. Here the church can multiply its points of contact with men and come to take a vastly larger place in the human heart.

Second. Closely following the above, both as cause and effect, comes a sore need of high ideals of life. The vast majority of the human race takes the keynote of life from externals, and the ideals inspired by the

**Church
lacks
equipment.**

**Need of
high ideals.**

average town environment cannot be of the best. There must be a personal inspiration from within the man if he is to rise above his surroundings; and here is the divine mission of the church—to furnish this inspired impetus for better things. If there is failure here the tongues of men and of angels and all the methods and equipments that can be devised will avail nothing. If the abiding flame of spiritual fire once perishes from the altar, there is left a cold church with but the sounding brass and tinkling cymbal, and the world will find it out as soon as we.

This lack of high ideals is met in the failure to obtain a response to suggestions of possible better things. A new movement of proposed improvement meets with a response that gives the enthusiastic worker a sensation such as he might expect from an audience of stumps. There is no reaction, no spring, no appreciation of the shortcomings of the present order. There is not so much an aversion to change, as a failure to take in the significance of an ideal that is noble and unselfish. Solemn promises are made and great things undertaken, but the dead-level remains undisturbed. The social reformer and the Christian minister appeal to the higher natures of the people only to find that they have called out into an empty space that returns no echo. The absence of reaction to the best that one puts forth is one of the hardest experiences of the Christian worker, and may

No
response.

account for the early discouragement of many efficient men. But for this, as for every human problem, there is a remedy, and the difficulties of the case will be the measure of the triumph of its solution. The "used-to-be's" will get out of the way; the "way-we-did-it-back-in-Jonesville" people will forget the past; and the bitter things said in the despair of the the first year's labor will every one be disproved, if, by patient continuance in well-doing, the Sun of truth be focused on the sluggish hearts till they melt into life and service.

Third. From the foregoing it may be readily inferred that, in the town, leaders of ability are scarce. Not only the worst, but, by a
Lack of sort of natural selection, the best, go
leaders. to the city, and by every country boy who has succeeded in city life the country is so much poorer. For fifty years we have reaped crop after crop and have made no return to the soil. The result is not far to seek. But American soil, of all the earth, is the most productive of men with possibilities; and once high ideals and culture facilities are supplied, as noble souls as earth knows will come forth to solve the problems of the town. The past few years have shown wonders in this direction. In the meantime, good leaders are rare. The pastor in the town church finds no one on whom he can depend for regular attention to important work; no one who will "go ahead" and relieve him of a state of mind

created by a situation in which he may collapse entirely at any moment. This condition within the church is but a reflection of that in the community without the church; for, has not the pastor been told again and again that "it is no use; that nothing will go in this place after the first start"? But with raw material at hand the problem of leadership is one of development, and the wise pastor will keep his greenhouse full of promising material in the process of being trained for the work.

Fourth. When people live as neighbors for years, without broad education or high ideals, the inevitable and human result is a state **Too well acquainted.** of personal relations that suggests the proverbial offspring of too much familiarity. In the absence of food for higher thought, the next-door doings or misdoings are a source of supply that proves to be a poisoned spring, deadly to all whole-souled faith in human possibilities, or unselfish co-operation for the social well-being. When our townsman has in mind his neighbors' only too numerous lapses for the past twenty years, mutual activity will be entered upon with a degree of mental reservation absolutely fatal to the enthusiasm and momentum so essential in all Christian work. Back-door relations are as hard to keep in order as back dooryards, and the very chickens seem determined to breed strife by annoying trespass. In the absence of better things to think about, trifles

are magnified till they fill the whole horizon. It is not strange that ideals are low, that there is a vacuum where there should be a great faith in humanity, and indifference where the earnest pastor longs to see live interest and earnest effort. A sort of co-operation is found in cliques and rings, that is like the children's see-saw—when one is up, the other is down. But the enthusiasm of a united band in spirit is lacking where each looks askance at his neighbor, and rolls his shortcomings, not under his tongue, but over it, for the ears of every willing or unwilling hearer.

These, however, are among the worst features of the situation. Having reached bottom, we may now start for higher levels. Stated more broadly, the social organization of the town is more simple, more individual, more primitive, while that of the city is more complex, more social and more highly developed.

Fifth. The town is the center of successive widening circles of country school districts that furnish a mission-field often as needy as the territory of any mission conference. In many of the communities there is no church, no preaching, no Gospel, no interest in anything except to make more money next year. That these districts present a problem that becomes more difficult every year, we are just beginning to realize.

If we are ever to take the town and its depend-

CONDITIONS OF THE PROBLEM 31

ent territory we must squarely face the conditions; we must meet them with the strength of a living Christ who has moved through the ages glorious in power to transform the hardest field into a garden of the Kingdom of Heaven.

CHAPTER IV

THE TOWN PASTOR

We may as well get to the root of the matter at once and acknowledge that the largest problem in the town church is the town pastor himself. The evidence from appointments and calls may not seem to corroborate this statement, but the testimony of results leads to this view. Yet some of the best men living are in town pulpits to-day and are doing God's service.

Pastor a problem.

Among all sorts of men, two classes are pretty clearly defined who find their way to town churches with about equally disastrous results.

Two classes of preachers.

First, the young man, who feels himself above his "present unpromising field of labor" and merely endures it in the hope of getting "something better." The pressing problems of the situation trouble him but little, for he expects soon to find room for his superior talents in a more cultured field, to which he is adapted. There is no denying that this man is out of place in the town church as he is in any other church.

The man in the second class is mature in years. He feels that his hard work is over and that it is time that he find an easy berth where the fruits

of his past study will suffice in lieu of further pulpit preparation. This man may not be old in years, for the feeling begins with some men at the close of school life. But, whenever it is reached, it is high time to retire from the ministry. This man feels that little can be done to improve his church. He shares the lack of ideal common to the people, and, as is always the case when the blind lead the blind, the church remains in the ditch.

In many towns the hopelessly demoralized condition of the church is largely due to a succession of failures in the pulpit—men who have
Succession of failures. blundered; men who have sinned; men who have done anything and everything but the right thing; men who have done nothing at all except eat, drink, and be comfortable. Churches can easily be found in which a half-dozen pastors in the last half-dozen years have been failures in various more or less notorious ways. Often a good man following such a procession is kept at arm's length for some time, and the beginning of his pastorate seriously handicapped by popular unwillingness to believe that the minister may be at the same time a man.

Then, when a "big man" is sent to the small church, he moves into town with glittering titles and imposing presence. Both he and
The "big preacher." the people feel that he is above them. Often he feels persecuted to be sent to such a charge, and mopes and whines, in spite of the

fact that "moping" is not preaching, nor whining "shining." The people soon tire of such a diet and leave the persecuted man to preach to empty pews. If there is a crying need to-day it is for a method of getting rid of unsuccessful ministerial derelicts adrift upon the ecclesiastical sea, bringing disaster to any bark that may attempt to take them in tow.

Our present interest, however, is not with men of the class referred to, so much as with men of a very different class—men of good preparation, sound mind, inspired heart and conscience—who find themselves, as town pastors, confronted by a set of conditions that appeals to the best that is in the man for a remedy. And the remedy must begin, first and last, so far as its human relations are concerned, in the pastor himself. There is no hope for a church if the way is blocked by a man whose sole ambition is to preach a "sermon worth hearing" one day in seven, allowing methods of reaching men, and organization of forces to take care of themselves. The devil is wiser.

As pastors, what are we doing to right the wrongs of men, to break the wall that stands between the church and the world, to provide substitutes for the ten-cent show and the saloon? What are we doing to make the church so practical, which is in the highest sense spiritual, that men will recognize it, not as a thing apart from life, but as an ever-open door into a larger life?

**Good men
looking for
a remedy.**

There is abundance of machinery at hand to accomplish the saving of the world if leaders are once found who are so inspired by the spirit of apostolic days as to regard difficulties as good for nothing except to be overcome. The first need is that of an abounding faith in the possibilities of the town church. And be it known that such faith is not the delusion of the devotee, but a spiritual vision of the Kingdom of Heaven let down upon earth; and the Kingdom is both possible and real to him that believeth. This vision of the greater church in the town is absolutely indispensable, for without it the pastor's labors often degenerate into a mere treadmill round, with a "bless-you-my-children" attachment to cover the lack of grist. But the live pastor, who stands where Jesus stood till he sees by faith the New Jerusalem come down from Heaven and set up in his town church—this man will go forth sowing as he walks and talks and lives, where his people live, till the harvest will come.

The greatest need of the town pastor, after this vision of the Kingdom, is a certain quality of efficiency that brings things to pass in one way or another—usually in another. If the principle that whatever ought to be done can be done, is once mastered, then it is a mere question of ways and means. If the first or the tenth method does not succeed, there is still no reason for discouragement. There is a

Vision of possibilities.

A way to succeed.

certain "light-on-one's-feet" quality that turns a fall into a new start for victory. So long as the world maintains that "there is a way to beat all games," the follower of the Lord Jesus who admits defeat is unworthy of his high calling. Some one has said that there are two classes of men, equal in training, ability, and manner, but differing in that one class brings things to pass, while the other always has the best of reasons for not having done so. The town preacher must belong to the first class.

In no place is the minister called upon to come in contact with so many phases of human nature as in the town church. His clerical

**The point
of contact.**

coat, benevolent expression and ministerial air will avail him nothing if his ignorance of the living and working conditions of his people becomes evident. In the close personal relations of the town every point of personal contact is of value. The minister need not pitch hay nor drive a dray. But let the people once suspect that he feels himself above such work and his hold upon them is gone forever. So far as a man filled with the spirit of the living God can become invincible, the town pastor must be so. If the "powers that be"

**The invincible
pastor.**

thrust him into a "hole," let him follow the example of the intelligent elephant and trample the earth of difficulties beneath his feet, till he comes, victorious, to the surface. If he cannot do this, perhaps it would be better

to multiply his difficulties until he and the remains of his unfortunate parish are buried beneath them. Then some new workman may come and begin on the surface of a clean, bare field, and build a structure that will stand while life shall last—the church of the living God. This sort of man will be filled with an indifference as to his own welfare that will make him indifferent as to whether his work is in the country or in the city. There is a crying need of men in the ministry who will dedicate themselves to the hard places. There is an abundant supply of men of polish and culture who are willing to immolate themselves on the altars of “easy,” prominent churches; but the need of the hour is for men who will go where the work most needs them, regardless of personal interest or convenience. To do less than this is to be less than a follower of Him who made Himself of no reputation that He might be the Chief Shepherd of the sheep. It was this invincible quality that made the evangelists of the first century the conquerors of the world. It was this that blazed out in every great extension of the church, and it is this that will be the solution of the problems of the church in the town.

There is no substitute for this quality of inspired enthusiasm. A pastor of moderate ability who sees a good thing, then goes at it and brings it to pass, will climb right over the heads of brilliant theorizers and investigators

who never get further than the investigation. "The end of the exploration is the beginning of the empire," and the end of all method and study must be the actual extension of the Kingdom. "A good thing, *but*——" has been the ruin of many a plan that would have been vastly useful if put into operation in spite of difficulties. The Spirit of God cannot work through a man who is always on the under side of a gigantic *if* or *but*.

The young pastor who comes to his first town church had better come well insulated, for he can never tell in advance from what quarter the lightning will strike first. The first Sunday service will find good attendance and good attention, and the encouraged pastor, by faith, sees already the strong church to be built from the materials at hand, then he sets out to bring his vision to pass, and here it is that he is first aware of the wall against which he has thrust his devoted head. The dear people listen respectfully to the plans proposed, promise to assist, and then fail utterly. Another trial is made, and, just when all depends upon the faithfulness of a few trusted ones, these fail to appear, and the pastor is left wondering what has happened. If he attempts to induce members of his church to work together, he speedily finds his fish-hook caught on a "ring," the origin of which is a matter of local ancient history. The pastor's earnest remonstrance is met by a spirit of indifference that plainly says, "You are new

First experiences.

here yet; you will soon get over your burst of enthusiasm." Finally it dawns upon the pastor that these people have no high ideals of the possibilities, nor do they want any. A hopeless "nothing-can-be-done" spirit has left them powerless to react against habit and custom, and things are allowed to take their natural course. This truth comes down on the enthusiasm of the pastor like a cold fog on a warm spring morning. If he belongs to the second of our two classes of men, he resigns or asks to be removed, for he now has the best of reasons for not having succeeded. But if he is of the unconquerable sort he girds up his loins and looks about for means that *will* succeed under the conditions at hand.

And he is right. Success is possible. He that endureth unto the end shall be saved and his church with him. When the transfor-

**Final
success.**

mation does come, sooner or later, the triumphant pastor will find that the very points that seemed most hopeless of conquest have become towers of strength. Close personal acquaintance is a most effective engine for influencing men for righteousness. Stolid indifference has become steadfast strength, and the most delightful relation of earth below is that of a godly and successful town pastor with his consecrated and inspired town church. With the Christ spirit and live methods, one by one these people will step into the fountain and the new order of things will arise in their lives.

There will be woeful exceptions, but others will arise from unexpected places, and, as the band of faithful ones becomes larger, the momentum of the church will increase till the pastor will some day find his ship over the bar and headed for deep water.

These are general terms, but the starting-point for success is in the firm conviction that where God wills, there is a way to perform. Once let the pastor give himself unreservedly to the fulfillment of the will of Him who sent him, and there remains but the devising of methods to meet the needs and solve the problems of the work

CHAPTER V

WHY METHODS?

If it is true that we ask and receive not, because we ask amiss, it is also true that we work and achieve not, because we work amiss.

Methods and power. The value of any method is in its linking of cause and effect. Methods are

not power, the fly-wheel is not steam, and neither pent-up steam nor divine power can work effectively without well-adapted means. In ages of primitive and simple social organization, methods were of less consequence. To-day, next after the touch of a risen Lord, they are all-important. The legacy of the nineteenth century to the generation following is a message concerning the need of methods. The steam-cylinder, the dynamo, the telephone, the lineotype are methods. The technical school, the Associated Press, the Farmers' Institute and the Women's Clubs are methods. The vaudeville, the free lunch, the "yellow" daily and the political machine are methods. In an age of wireless telegraphy and liquid air, shall the church alone sit by the light of smoking candles and bewail its unsought gloom and half-filled pews?

There never was a time when methods of work—the way of doing things—was of such vital consequence as now. With a simple social structure, in a world organized on an individual basis, the *how* was not of so much importance as the *whence*.

New
methods
for new
conditions.

Given a cause of truth, a man of power, details were of less importance; if left to themselves they would be at least as well adapted as those of opposing forces. A simple world got along with a loose organization of Christian forces. A world tenfold more complex can be Christianized only by methods tenfold better adapted to the work to be done. We may cut wood with iron, but we must cut iron with steel and glass with diamonds. But we do not chop wood with a razor nor hoe corn with a pen. Methods must be adapted to the work and its conditions.

And they will be. The expanding life of the church has generated methods to meet the needs of every age. The methods of the first Christian century were just the means for the time. The Crusades, brotherhoods, and ecclesiasticism itself served a purpose. Ritualism met a demand. Methodism was an adaptation to meet the needs of the hour. Those needs may pass, but the need of consecrated methodizers will never pass. Those methods of a century ago were mighty under God to the casting down of high places and the conversion of many. But we face the needs of a new century with its intense condi-

tions, its social unrest and its highly differentiated life. To try to save the world of the twentieth century with the methods of the eighteenth is to further withdraw the church from the world and fix a great gulf between.

A large number of faithful men in the ministry to-day are conscious of expending a vast amount of energy in proportion to the **Unsatisfactory results.** The mechanic completes his piece of work, the teacher takes the pupil through the course of study, the merchant draws a balance-sheet, but the minister may be grateful if he barely holds his own, without numerical or financial loss, through the year. He loads his artillery and fires away at the enemy "by faith," all the while wondering whether any one has been hit. This is due to something else than lack of earnestness or industry. Occasionally we find a man in business or professional life trying to get on with the equipment that his father used, and the results bear a striking likeness to those of the average minister—they are meager and unsatisfactory.

We need a revival of methods as well as of men. To try to keep up with an age of steam by a vociferous prodding of the oxen that **Need of revival of methods.** our fathers drove is to find both the blind and their leaders in a deep ditch, while the world moves on. Granted a loyalty to the spirit of truth, the same degree of ingenuity

and adaptability in the methods of the church as are found in those of the world will produce equally definite and satisfactory results. It is not more machinery nor more organizations that are needed; nor is it simply "more power," but it is methods that fit, backed by power that will conquer. This involves no increase of machinery, but it may often cause the discarding of much that is outgrown and clumsy.

The small increase in church membership during the closing years of the nineteenth century has been attributed to nearly every imaginable cause. The weather, the war, the "time-limit," the young people's work, the financial prosperity, the political administration, the woman's clubs, the evangelist, the world, the flesh and the devil—have all come in for a share. But may it not be that a considerable share of the shortage may be attributed to the fact that the church is not up-to-date in the devising of methods to meet existing conditions? In the downtown districts of the cities the forsaken condition of the people who most need the Gospel and all it stands for—while the church has moved away to more comfortable and stylish quarters—needs no comment. In the country town we are conducting the church as our ancestors did a century ago, and the moral (or immoral) life of the surrounding community is a fearful commentary on the inadequacy of the means to the work to be done.

**Small gain
in church
membership.**

Happily the facts are not all of this color. There are great open churches, the centers of life and power in the lower districts of great cities. There are town churches that are wide-awake and as effective as the town high school or leading business houses. The thing can be done, and sometimes it is only a matter of the change of a few details that will turn the current from discouragement to victory.

Right means do succeed.

The first principle in the school of methods, the axiom on which all success is founded, is that there is *some* way to get done anything that ought to be done. The fact that the first or the tenth device fails to accomplish the desired end, simply indicates that *the* method has not yet been found. If one plan out of three is a real success in getting the thing done, the worker may consider that he is doing very well indeed. But he should first be very sure that the end sought is within the limits; that it ought to be done. Then, having set the standard, let nothing divert from the accomplishment of the end sought.

Some way to do what should be done.

A poor method, well worked, is worth a hundred good schemes poorly worked. Some very successful men have got along with almost no methods at all, because they worked most efficiently the few means that they did use. There is certain success for any man who will adopt this simple rule with regard to all plans of work: "Being convinced

The man behind the method.

that a given method is a good thing and should be put in force, go at it and do it, allowing nothing to interfere with the reaching of the end in view." The invincible man will allow no *ifs* or *buts* to come between him and success, and this invincibleness combined with level-headedness is in itself success.

Methods are like sermons, in that every man must grow his own. There is a sense in which all methods must be original with the user: he must work them out and make them an expression of himself, from whatever source he may have received the suggestion. Every man who strives for the mastery and achieves it, feels that he succeeds best with his own methods. The value of other men's plans is almost solely in their suggestiveness, but this is a very real and substantial value. The man who is continually receiving a new impetus from without will find ways and means of doing things constantly, but unconsciously forming in his mind, and though he may not be able to tell where the schemes come from, he will be able to get results therefrom, which is of vastly greater consequence.

There is a class of men intolerant of anything that is new in ways of doing things. There is another class of men much more intolerant of anything that is old. The man who most often succeeds holds fast to whatever is good in the old and searches vigorously for anything of value in the new.

**Every man
his own
methods.**

There is another class of men to whom the matter of methods is of little interest for the reason that they have a single remedy for any and all troubles and they never fail to offer it regardless of the conditions of the case. These one-term remedies are usually things of great importance and, in themselves, fundamental necessities. The mistake is in disregarding the value of methods in the application of the remedies. One earnest brother stoutly affirms that the only need of the church is that of the baptism of the Holy Spirit, forgetting the fact that the age following Pentecost was exceedingly rich in its development of methods of service. Another goes to the other extreme and regards "institutional" means as the cure-all, overlooking the results, or lack of results, coming to churches that have lost sight of the spiritual side of life for a religion of culture and clubs. Still another man is enthusiastic in advocating as a specific the "old-fashioned revival," meaning thereby a series of protracted meetings led usually by some itinerant evangelist, in spite of the very mixed character of the results obtained from such a process in the past.

The great truth is that every method of value must arise from an effort to meet an existing need. The adopting of a method merely because it succeeded in some other place is usually a failure. The first step is the finding of just what local needs

**One-term
remedies.**

**First find
needs.**

are, and this is not always easy to do. Something is wrong, but what is it? It often takes most careful study of existing conditions before any light comes or any remedy can be suggested at all. By close observation, careful noting of impressions, conversing with large numbers of all sorts of people, or with the special class interested, canvassing numbers of men with one or two pointed questions, getting their standpoint and seeing with their eyes—by all sorts of earnest digging among the conditions of the difficulty, the student will get a light on the subject that will make his diagnosis of value. Take such a question as, "Why do people not go to church?" or, "Why do men prefer the lodge to the church?" and, after putting it to several hundred people and making a note of their answers, sum up results. The man who does not know more when he concludes than when he begins the study is hopeless so far as improvement is concerned. A great light will break in upon the worker and the remedies devised in that light will be of a different sort from those invented in solitude. True, it is rare that the best remedies or greatest thoughts come in direct answer to this cold-blooded digging for them as such, but the inspirational idea that kindles the whole man into life and action comes with tenfold more of force and value after the careful study has been made.

We may ask ourselves, as pastors, a question: "What does my church stand for?" Is it a

beggar on the street-corners of the world, or is it a mighty engine of social reconstruction and spiritual power? Has it a con-

What is the church for?

stant struggle to hold its own? Is it a matter for congratulation if it pays its bills, or is it the strongest force for righteousness in the community, and the one great moral leader in all things human? "What *does* the church do?" and "What *should* the church do?" are two sides of a chasm that *can* be bridged. How shall we do it? While God giveth the increase, the planting and watering are still ours, and much of the results will depend on the efficiency of our part of the work.

Since God uses methods we need not affect to despise them. We shall never succeed without divine power, but divine power will never reach men till we furnish the channel of methods. Ring in the new church, open the doors of ministry and helpfulness and healing and saving, for, "Inasmuch as ye did it unto the least of these ye did it unto Me."

CHAPTER VI.

MEMBERS AND NON-MEMBERS

That the non-members are in the large majority goes without saying. In some good places the relative numbers may be very nearly equal, but in the ninety-nine "peculiar" communities the proportion of members is far less than one-half. In Western states the church-membership varies from one-sixth to one-fourth of the population, and in some frontier towns the church-member is an illusive personage. While membership records are not always well kept, the recorder seeming to take in all space in three worlds in the latitude allowed, the pastor of the village church is not troubled by a long list of names of people whom nobody can locate or identify. His membership is, in the main, easily found and not difficult to get acquainted with. Then there is a pretty general absence of that pest of prominent churches, the "church boss," beside whom the "political boss" is a worthy individual. The crank may be there, but he passes for a crank and does not have the influence that might be his if he were not so well known.

Some form of membership directory may be of great value even in small churches. When printed and distributed it is an excellent **Membership directory.** advertisement for the church, and goes far toward the establishment of a feeling of organized unity so much needed in the smaller church. To see itself on paper is to increase the self-respect of the church. No fraternal society holds its membership so loosely as the church does, and we may take an item in this particular. A neat little booklet is published by a church of one hundred members, giving all officers and committees, the schedule of regular services, pastor's hours, invitation to strangers and an alphabetical list of members of the church and congregation, an "M" or a "A" being placed opposite each name to indicate whether a "member" or "attendant" only. This plan of recording regular attendants has many advantages. It makes the directory representative of the whole congregation; it makes the attendant feel that he is wanted and has some part in the church; it often tends to fix the church-going habit and may have a restraining influence on some who otherwise might fall into temptation. The objection that such "associate" membership will be accepted as good enough without the realization of the need for a more active and vital spiritual life is not valid, if the spiritual life of the church is what it should be. The cost of printing such a directory is often met by the much-worked plan

of inserting reputable "ads." If it can be done from the church treasury, or by a special fund subscribed for the purpose, the work will be of more value and will be more attractive.¹

A most vital element in every working church is that of "social self-consciousness" or *esprit de corps*—a church feeling that serves as
 The church "spirit." a central magnet to draw together the diverging branches of the organization. Without this feeling the very best of Christians may be assembled for stated worship and there never be present the first principle of a church. Unless there is unity and fraternity in the church there will be no foundation on which to build effective service or helpful devotion. With a constantly changing membership the church, in the West, is building on a flowing stream. In the East there is more of permanency, but if the altar-fire burns clear the newcomer is quickly made one of the family. There is nothing more contagious than this fellowship in the household of faith, if it is strong in the nucleus of those that compose the working force. What is called "unsociability" is usually nothing but the lack of this quality, and the havoc wrought by this evil is greater in the church of the town than anywhere else. If the lodge is taking the place of the church with American men, is it not time we were making the church more inclusively (not exclusively) fraternal?

¹ For further discussion of this principle see Chap. XIII.

The fraternal spirit is of quite rapid growth when once intelligently cultivated. An occasional service in which different laymen take some part, representing different branches of work, is helpful in this direction, and the more so because the result is an indirect one. An occasional membership reception by the pastor, or at the home of some earnest worker, with somewhat of an air of exclusiveness about it, has been worked with much success. In the larger churches the annual reception to the pastor is an excellent education. In some smaller churches the pastor is regarded as the hired man of the church, and such a thing as a reception to him is never thought of. In this case let the pastor give a reception to new members and someone will awake, if vigorous measures are used. The church is so wide open to all comers that it is in a constant danger of losing its sense of organic unity and some attention must be directed to this feature to prevent or cure the looseness found in many small churches. The larger church gathers enough momentum to overcome its own inertia and get into the current, but the smaller bark must be towed over the bar.

A far more difficult problem is that of unfaithfulness and open immorality on the part of an occasional member. The harm done by such persons needs no discussion—what to do with the offender is the question. Under the close scrutiny of a small

**Immorality
of church
members.**

community all matters of discipline are doubly difficult, for privacy is out of the question. Church trials are the especial delight of the gossip. If by any means a withdrawal can be arranged without compromising the church, a trial had better be avoided; but an open trial and vindication of right is better than a standing disgrace in the community, caused by the continuation in membership of a life known to be out of harmony with the ethics of Christian living. The Scriptural plan of cumulative remonstrance will often work most effectively if worked by godly men of tact and earnestness.

In the town the "church" includes much more of the arc of social and individual life than in the city. The church in the midst of a hundred

Three relations of members and non-members.

thousand people, built for the use of the members, may have some characteristics of a private enterprise, but the church in a community of a few hundreds or thousands cannot ignore nor neglect the vast constituency known as the non-members. Three pretty well defined sorts of relations between the two classes may be found. The first, with its pew system, its social stratification and its "exclusively-for-ourselves" air, with an occasional stranger admitted by invitation or tolerance, is not a problem of the town church. It does not exist in town soil. The line between members and non-members is always less sharply drawn, but there are still two ways left of look-

ing at the outsider. He may be so much neutral territory to be exploited for gain, to be made the victim of petty larceny schemes in the shape of twenty-five cent supper tickets and contributions to all sorts of ecclesiastical side-shows. The church "brother-in-law" comes in for a generous allowance and his member-wife is exhorted to "work" him for all he is worth. In prayer-meeting, or when the "special effort" is in progress, some righteous brother with an uncertain reputation in his own business life prays vociferously for him, rhetorically standing him up as a "sinner" and "broad-siding" him with all the terrors of the law, the while intimating by unctuous inflection that he is thankful that none of these things apply to himself.

The remaining attitude toward the non-member is that of regarding him as an associate contingent from which to draw recruits for the Kingdom. He is not to be "worked," but to be loved and won to the Christ-life. Nor is he a hopelessly bad man from a moral standpoint. He sometimes lives a more exemplary life than his loud-praying brother, and may sometimes be most useful to the church.

A canvass of the entire population of the town is a plan that has resulted in the acquirement of much information and, in cities, has done much good in cases where results have been followed up. In a community, too small to make such a canvass necessary the

**Canvass of
community.**

pastor can make a map of the territory covered by his church, indicating by different colored pencils the different denominational affiliations or non-membership of every house in the town. This will at least show clearly the unoccupied territory to be brought into the church. The plan of canvass so successfully carried out by the different State Sunday School Associations has many advantages for a town of less than several thousand population. This plan arranges for the canvass of an entire county—or less territory if advisable—in a single day. The work is accomplished by calling for volunteers from all evangelical churches, usually assigning to each church the privilege of furnishing a certain number or pro rata of the whole number needed for the work. The territory is then divided into districts and a committee placed in charge of each. The success of the work in the individual district rests mainly with the district chairman, who must be a mighty man of valor and a skillful organizer of forces. The district committee, having secured sufficient canvassers, assigns to each pair a certain territory. Two by two they go forth from the preliminary meeting of prayer on the morning of the day appointed. About forty calls are usually assigned to every pair of canvassers. The facts ascertained from every house canvassed may be made to include such items as local needs most require, but usually include church-membership or preference of each resident; former

membership, if any; number of children and in what Sunday School, if any; preferences of children or parents. The value of this work is of course mainly in the way in which it is followed up by pastors and church visitors afterwards. All names of parties indicating any preference are handed to the pastor of the church indicated, and those who express no preference are left to be chosen by anyone who will volunteer to look after them. Such a canvass, followed up, will bring every soul in the community at least within the reach of an invitation to church and Sunday School. Various modifications may be made to meet the needs of small communities, and the general stirring-up that will come from the united and organized activity of an earnest band of workers cannot but infuse new life into the regular services of the church and Sunday School.

The relation of the church to the "non-church" may be, and usually is, a friendly one. The church, like its divine Lord, must draw men unto itself if it is to save them. It can never drive them into the Kingdom. It is often found that outsiders can be used to good advantage in the secondary offices of the church, on social committees of the young people's society and in many places where the help thus received is so much clear gain. That all such should be of exemplary character is evident, but of greater importance is the truth

**Tribute
from the
non-mem-
bers.**

that such persons must always be a minority and never be allowed to dominate the tone of the work in which they are employed. The Saviour did not hesitate to employ such means and there is no reason why we should, if in the same spirit as that of the apostle who was all things to all men that he might *save* some.

CHAPTER VII

PERSONAL WORK

In the larger city church the enthusiasm of numbers and the strong pulpit-work of a man who devotes his entire time to the work as pastor and preacher, are productive of a momentum that often draws many people into the current, and the stream gathers headway as it goes. The absence of this very thing in the smaller church is one of the conditions to be met and overcome. The town pastor feels that his work stops exactly where he lets go of it and there is a discouraging sensation of dead-weight that takes the enthusiasm out of him. Much can be done by vigorous measures that will kindle enthusiasm in response to the pastor's own earnestness, but the ultimate remedy is in the individual worker. If he is not present, no amount of "rousements" will infuse life into the dormant organization. The momentum of the working church is simply the cumulative result of the work of many individuals each adding something to the whole. To build such a church it is better to begin at the bottom than at the top, though an occasional timber may be run up to inspire a vision of the coming structure. The key to the success that will build a working

The individual worker the unit of success.

and a drawing church is personal work on the part of the individual member.

In the town more depends on the man than on the form of organization or the method used.

There is such a thing as organizing a church to death. The unpleasant eruption known as "office itch" is much aggravated by a constant effort to exalt the importance of the offices held rather than of the work to be done. It frequently happens that there is about enough working-force in a small church to run well the work of one or two societies aside from the Sunday School and preaching services. If the societies most needed under local conditions be well manned and managed, good work will be done and the whole church will grow. If two or three others be organized on top of those already in the field, something must give way. One or the other goes to the wall or perhaps all lapse into a comatose condition that discourages the whole church.

There is evident an increasing emphasis placed on the necessity of a return to the apostolic method of evangelizing the world—a method that placed chief importance upon, and gained greatest results from, individual dealing with men and bringing them one by one into the Kingdom. In the rapid development of connectional interests, the great improvement and increase in church property, we have lost sight of the need of this systematic,

The apostolic method.

one-by-one work, and the slackening rate of increase has been a natural result. The appalling fact is presented by the last census that it takes twenty-two of us one year to make one convert, and this twenty-two includes the work done by pastors. We may rise up and ask what we have been doing that it takes one of us twenty-two years to make one convert. But it is well known that such converts as are won, are the fruit of the work done by a comparatively few effective workers, leaving the appalling truth that the most of us never in all our lives bring a single soul to Jesus.

Now, how is this to be remedied? Preaching at people will not do it—that is what we have been doing. No good comes from crying that the former days were better than these—if they were, so much the worse for us. Increased activity in personal work on the part of the pastor will do much good, but we are still wide of the mark. The key to the coming conquest of the world for Christ is in the development and training of lay forces. In the average church there is enough of brains and influence—yes, and of real spirituality, too—to furnish the human instrumentality, if once organized and focused on the definite work of winning men to God. And this is the pastor's high calling—to be a drillmaster of the forces committed unto him that he may make of them valiant soldiers for the cross. This can be done as well in the town as anywhere if once attention is given to it as a definite

work and right methods are employed in training for service.

A good point at which to begin, especially if the pastor is new to the church, is that of a working census of the church. This may be made by printing a card, with the names of all societies and branches of church work in columns with such matters of Christian duty and privilege as public prayer, testimony, calls on the sick, work in the after-meeting, speaking to unsaved about salvation, and any other items of work that needs to be done. At the bottom of the card a line is left for the name of the worker, who is given the card and requested to check off the different things that he will be willing to do, or societies in which he will work, and return the card, signed, to the pastor. With a set of cards representing the membership of the church, the pastor at once has before him the working forces at hand and the location of the weak points that need development. The presentation of the needs of the work in this way will sometimes stir up the hearts of some who will take hold of some branch of work rather than admit an unwillingness to do anything.

Having done this, however, let it not for a moment be supposed that the people will forthwith proceed to carry out the things promised without further care on the part of the pastor. If they did, the pastor might consider himself honorably dis-

**A Working
census.**

**Must be put
to work.**

charged, to devote himself to the winding up of some other churchful of people. Ninety per cent of these people must be shown what to do, when to do it and how to do it; then they must be shown over again many times before they learn the lesson and carry the responsibility themselves. The one essential, fundamental thing is to get them to doing something. There is absolutely no substitute for this doing of things in Christian life and growth. To invent a work for every member of the church and then set him at it and keep him at it may not be an easy task, but it is the one ideal toward which the successful pastor must work if he is to develop a working church. In many a church the present working force is so inadequate for the needs of the field that the development of raw material is the only

**Chart of
members
and work
being done.**

hope for the work. A big chart of members' names in one column and the work being planned for them, might hang in the pastor's study and fifteen minutes a day be spent in studying it, with most beneficial results. It sometimes happens that the only hope for a certain office is to take a "plunge" and put in someone wholly new to the work at hand. If the capacity for the work and a sense of its importance are present, this will sometimes work wonderfully well, but sometimes it is disastrous. It is rarely ever safe to allow nominations for important offices to

be made at random in any meeting called for the purpose. If the pastor has tact he will consult beforehand with those most interested and can usually avoid the charge of "running things," except as it may come from some disgruntled office-seeker. If this person makes trouble, go straight to him and present to him his duty to take any place that may be assigned him as a part of the mission of every follower of the Master. The disciple is not above his master, nor the servant above his lord. Nothing in all the church is of more importance than this filling of the principal lay offices. The work of the whole year will be made or marred by the sort of material put into the Sunday School, the Young People's Society, the finance committee and the social work.

It is in the work of personally directing men and women into the way of salvation that there is most difficulty in finding leaders and workers. At this point the pastor must focus his heaviest artillery if he is to secure results. But the effort is well worth the while; for, not only may the results be secured, but they will, when secured, inspire and revive the work of the whole church. To reach this result, as any other, some methods are useful besides the mere example of the pastor.

After a sermon on the subject, the pastor may begin operations by asking each person to hand him within one week the name of some person for

whose salvation the member will agree to pray with the pastor. If the member will also speak to the person of the matter when opportunity offers, let him make a note of the

**Pastor's list
of praying
workers.**

fact on the card handed in. The pastor has now several things of value. A

list of the praying members of his church and a list of those for whom they will pray and work. He also has a list of good material to work on for definite spiritual impressions. He has a new point of contact with the member and may make it a field of co-operation. If this plan is followed up it is inevitable that interest shall be aroused in the personal salvation of other people and the pastor soon finds who his workers are.

He may now gather them into a training class and will find such a class of immense value in the pursuance of the work. The class need

**The training
class.**

not be large; from three to a dozen is enough. Should more attend, they

may be divided into sections. It may be well to plan a limited course of definite lessons for the training part of the work. These the live pastor can of course arrange for himself, though by using some one of the printed pamphlets containing such courses each member of the class may have a copy. Three features may be included in the work of the class:

I. The Scripture Lesson. This will naturally bear on the subject of personal work in some phase. Six interviews of Jesus may be selected

so as to cover about all the typical cases to be met with in ordinary interviews with men.

II. *Reports of Work Done.* As each one agrees to engage in some definite personal work, a few minutes spent in reports from workers will furnish the material for practical application of the truths gleaned from the lesson, and will make definite the thoughts that may arise during the hour.

III. *Review of Passages of Scripture Committed to Memory for the Purpose of Using with Inquirers.* Not many should be assigned for memory work, but those that are should be the most searching and striking and adapted for daily use in personal work.

A suggestive outline, or time-table, may be as follows:

I. Prayer. A sentence or two from each one present.

II. Bible topic. Twenty minutes.

III. Reports of work done, and consideration of actual cases. Thirty minutes.

IV. Review drill of Scripture passages. Ten minutes.

On account of the personal character of the work done in such a class it is best to make the meetings private. The feeling of fellowship will be increased if all can gather about a large table with Bibles and notebooks.

Another plan that has resulted in the arousing of much interest in Bible study is that of organ-

izing and conducting a Bible training school to meet two evenings per week for one month. A course of study can be laid, covering the essential facts of Bible history and great truths bearing on experience and life. Different pastors can be gotten to take different topics and much material can be thus used for the good of the course. To make the course of value to the lay member a systematic course of study is conducted during the first thirty minutes of the evening, and a certain amount of work required of each student. Report subjects are assigned on the second evening of the course to be studied individually and presented in written form at the end of the course. An examination may be conducted on the last evening which will prove of much value in finding the lessons learned.

**Bible
training
school.**

A successful pastor inaugurated a campaign of personal work for souls by the use of the following card, to which a pin and small ribbon were attached:

**A covenant
card.**

FELLOW CHRISTIAN:—Are you looking for a baptism of grace and power? Are you ready to co-operate with the Blessed Grace in building up His cause? Are you willing with God's help to strive for the salvation of one soul by work and prayer? Will you ask Him to open the way for you to work? Will you do so every day? Will you follow as He directs? Will you covenant this with us to-day?

If so, wear this ribbon as a reminder of your membership in the praying band of the M. E. Church.

_____, Pastor.
_____, Assistant.

We have reached the point in the salvation of the world when the only method that will win men is that set forth in the instructions given to those who were to distribute the invitations to the wedding-feast.

The political machine a model.

We must go out and compel them to come in. No other means will avail. In this work we have a splendid opportunity to learn from the prince of this world. The children of (political) darkness are indeed wiser in their generation than the children of light, and from them we may take the model for the most effective instrument in the world to-day—the political machine. The genius of this instrument, engine of iniquity though it may sometimes be, is comprehended in two words—*Organization and Personal Work*. The pastor who will make a study of the political machine and put its methods to work in the winning of souls will revolutionize the life of his church. Of course it is not meant that the dishonest practices or deceit of the boss should be copied, but the plan of delegating every voter to some “worker,” who is held responsible for him, is exactly what we need in the work of saving men. The political rally, with its cannonading and oratory, is merely a bluster. It is not supposed that elections are won in that way. It is the individual work that counts—the stump speaking and brass band merely confirm the assurances of the “worker.” Yet we expect to win men to God by merely holding a weekly

rally and singing "campaign songs" to him out of the hymn-book. And this delegated personal work is an entirely practicable method for the pastor. A man comes to church, shows signs of interest, but dodges the pastor. Find his friend in the church, if he has one and delegate the stranger to him. If he has no friend, appoint someone to make himself friendly and win the man. The pastor may thus multiply his points of contact with men to the great increase of his efficiency as a soul-saver.

In the reaching of the stranger and sojourner about the town a plan known as the "Fisherman's Club" is of great advantage in any but

The Fisherman's Club.

the smallest towns. Organize the club to fish for souls with the Saviour's promise to Peter as a motto. Get printed two letters, one to the non-churchgoers of the town and one to the passing tourist. Have a zinc etching of good quality made of the letters and they can be printed at any time. The letter is complete all but the date, which may be filled in with an ink that looks so much like the print that it may be mistaken for a hand-written letter. Date about the number of letters that will be needed in each week, and, on Saturday afternoon, have them folded (by the King's Daughters or Junior League or a Sunday School class) with a copy of the church "Bulletin" (if one is printed), in an envelope. A special Fisherman's Club delivery stamp, just as nice as a regular postage stamp, is

placed on the outside of the envelope. Saturday night the young men of the club come in with their lists. They have been to all the hotels and lodging houses of the town and bring the names of those who are to be the guests over Sunday. The names are carefully written on the envelopes and carried back to the hotels. The special-delivery stamp attracts attention; the person's name is on the envelope; of course, he will open it and read the hand-written letter on the inside. The invitations may be made so polite that almost every one will come. If they hear common sense, sound Gospel, and the service is interesting, they may come again.

The plan known as "Silent Evangelism" is so well known as to need no comment. The pastor can often get neat cards printed with an invitation or warning that will be of value if wisely distributed.

CHAPTER VIII

PASTORAL WORK

Much emphasis has been placed on the truth that there is a boundless opportunity for good in the minister's work as a pastor. "The foolishness of preaching" is the divinely ordained means of evangelizing the earth, but the size of the divinely ordained audience is not prescribed by sacred law. The ministry of the pulpit will always be prominent by reason of the public functions associated therewith; but, wherever the pulpit has been cut off from the power of personal contact, its power has withered and it has found itself facing empty pews. The supreme agency for saving men is through the power of personal contact, and here the battle of earth's redemption is to be fought.

And what is "pastoral work"? One brother says, "Visit, visit," meaning thereby the spending of much time in telling of good stories and eating of good dinners.

The pastoral call.

Another spends the afternoon pleasantly in the society of good women and wonders why in the forest of ribbons and feathers on Sunday morning he sees so few men at church. And that social-ecclesiastical-spiritual function known as the "pastoral call"—what is it? One pastor

never considers that he has made a pastoral call unless he has prayed with the household or such part thereof as did not see him coming and flee to the mountains. Another man counts every "Good morning," a call, and reports hundreds of such visits at every meeting of the church board. Between the two extremes are all sorts of ideas of the work of the pastor. If we have at all determined what the church in the world is we can now ascertain what its pastor ought to do in addition to his duties directly connected with the pulpit. If the church is for all people, and the pastor is its "minister," he becomes the general servant of the community in things moral and spiritual. He becomes subject to all sorts of demands on his time and energy that would be out of place if he is simply the hired minister unto a few people organized for purposes of worship and self-improvement. This idea "multiplies the work of the pastor." Yes, it does; and it multiplies his points of contact with men and his possibilities for usefulness, too. But, unless we can multiply our present rate of doing things, somewhere, the cause is hopeless for taking the world at any but a very remote date.

Anything that gives the pastor a hold on men and draws them church-ward and God-ward is his legitimate work. Now social visiting may be, and is, such work, but it is a very small part of it. Whenever the pastor has an errand connected with the Kingdom and any living soul, let him

go in the name of the Lord and perform it. He will be doing "pastoral work." He may step into a store and speak one cheering sentence to a busy man behind a counter; he may climb onto a dray and leave a word of encouragement with a lone teamster as he rides along a crowded street; he may interview the chief of police in favor of a better city government; he may be on the school grounds at recess time—and in all these, and a thousand other ways be making pastoral calls. It is better not to attempt to count the number of such calls made. Let work be estimated by its results, not by the detail of the means taken to accomplish it.

The demand for this hand-to-hand work is much greater in the town than in the city. There is less of social function to occupy time and attention and serve as a means of reaching the people. Everybody is acquainted with everybody else, and, if the pastor is to cut any figure in the community, he must speedily get acquainted, too. In an old community of this sort it is often true that, in order get into the good graces of the community at all, one must soon win the friendship of a few people who, by reason of long standing in the town, have come to be regarded as authority in the matter of innovations of all sorts. To win the pivotal people is one of the duties of the man who will influence the people for good. Such work is not a servile "toadying" to the local aristocracy, unless the pastor makes it such;

it is simply getting the key to the situation that by it he may unlock doors of opportunity for good.

The pastor's supreme mission is not to instruct or edify in knowledge, but to inspire and enthuse with the desire for the divine life.

Pastor must arouse desire for the divine life.

Enthusiasm for good is the supreme need of men. Many a man will arise and serve God if once he catches the idea that he *can* make the break with his old life and swing over into the new. To be a conscience and to stir up the dormant hunger for righteousness is the pastor's work among men. He is the human agency of the Divine Spirit who comes to convict the world of judgment, righteousness and sin.

To do this, individual treatment is the most fruitful remedy. "There is always, in any place,

Individual treatment.

some soul ready to step into the Kingdom if the right means be used to bring decision." Conviction comes whenever the Spirit speaks to a human heart in sin. The preaching of the truth, the living of godly lives, the direct work of the Spirit will bring conviction; but to get from those convicted a definite decision requires the direct dealing of one soul with another. And here is the pastor's opportunity—to take convicted men, one at a time, and bring them into the valley of decision. To see them come out of that valley saved men will be his richest reward. One successful pas-

tor's rule is: "Pray for one Sunday School teacher till she is thoroughly converted, then get her to pray for one scholar till that one is converted, and keep the process going." If followed out there is success in it; but without enthusiasm the machinery of this rule, or any other, runs more and more slowly till the old stand-still is reached again.

Method is of great value to a man who must do a large number of different sorts of things, and
Method. keep all irons in his fire at the proper temperature. The man who makes his system his servant acquires a knack of keeping his work ahead of him that multiplies his efficiency immensely. If the town pastor has thrust upon him a hundred details that are managed by laymen or paid assistants in the larger church, he has the need of some well-organized plan to make the accomplishment of these things sure.

A well-kept visiting list is of value in even a small church. It should be made up alphabetically and include names of all members
Visiting lists. of the church and congregation and any others who should be called upon. A figure indicating the month and day when called upon last may prove a convenient reminder of duty that would otherwise be forgotten in the rush of other things. It is, in some cases, well to explain to the congregation that the pastor is in constant readiness to call upon any one needing him, in order to invite such opportunities for

helpfulness; but, at the same time, make a plain statement that he shall call on no one unless he has some reason for doing so; that he has no time to run about making calls for the mere sake of sociability. When once understood, this principle will save misunderstanding and will open the eyes of many to the fact that the pastor has something to do besides feasting on the fat of the land.

In the care of young converts the minister's greatest function lies as a pastor. A good plan is to delegate each convert to some older Christian of established experience and congenial tastes and hold him responsible for the well-being of the new Christian. This has often worked well, but does not take the place of the pastor's personal supervision.

**Delegate
new convert
to old
Christian.**

Where there are more than two or three, and they are young people, as they are most apt to be, some sort of converts' class should be conducted, in such a way that the young members feel that the class is an important thing in their lives. A roll-book should be carefully kept by the secretary and the meetings made so interesting that they will be looked forward to with pleasure. Timidity in prayer and testimony may be overcome in the smaller meetings of the class, while instruction in Christian living, Bible doctrine and church polity will make intelligent and steadfast Chris-

**Converts'
classes.**

tians of some who at first are very fearful souls. A reception at the parsonage may be a further means of keeping a close hold on those who are likely to drift during the first months of a Christian life.

CHAPTER IX

"INSTITUTIONAL" MEANS.

The term "institutional" is a poor one, and the use to which it has been put has not improved it for our purposes. It has been taken in a general way to include those forms of ministration to the physical, mental and social needs of men that have been undertaken by some churches in large cities where living conditions are more or less severe, and the needs of men are varied and pressing. But those who are laboring to do this form of work are not trying to build up institutions as such. The whole spirit of the movement is that of life and service rather than a cold adherence to methods for their own sake. The term "open church" has been suggested and is much used as expressing the idea of the movement. While it is better than "institutional" it is still inadequate. The truth is there is nothing new in the basal movement of the open church. There is only a modern return to the ministry of Jesus which was of all things farthest removed from adherence to methods or formal institutions. The spirit of ministration has always been in the church, but the comparatively simple ministration of the eighteenth century does not meet the needs of

complex city conditions of the twentieth; hence we have a new term and a further development of the idea.

Most of those methods and activities connected with the open church in the downtown district of

the city have little room for employment in the church of the town, but the

Spirit of service.

essential spirit of service must be a part of the town church, as of every other. To

carry out this idea it is not necessary that a church should remain open twenty-four hours per

day and maintain an expensive plant in charge of a half-dozen paid officers. The prime need

for the town is not so much for an open church as it is for an open home that shall be

Christlike in its temper and actions. The church that can send its members

Need open homes.

home to live out there the ideal life is the church for the town. The underlying principle of the ministering church is that it shall do

for people whatever needs to be done for them that is not, or cannot, be done, as well by some

other agency. In a community where the majority of people have comfortable and well-ordered

homes the form of service must be essentially different from one made up of people either with-

out homes or with homes scarcely deserving the name. When the church of the town comes to

take the place of an existing home rather than become the inspiration and strong ally of that

home, it is doing a service of most doubtful value.

There is, however, a ministration to needs mental and social that the church can direct to the supplementing of the home life in a way most beneficial. Many of the plans and methods gathered in this work are properly methods of the open church and have a useful place in the town. The idea is becoming general that the church must widen its borders if it is to possess the land, and the majority of ministers are looking for some adaptation of means that will save the men, the boys and the unreached of every sort. Of a number of town pastors approached on the subject nearly all were in favor of such methods, but expressed a feeling of helplessness in undertaking such work for themselves.

George W. Mead gives the following as the six cardinal principles of the open church movement: Evangelism, Consecration, Ministration, Adaptability, Extension, Organization. Any means that grow out of zeal in the first principle, namely, evangelism, may be undertaken with any church with a probability of good results following. The zeal for the saving of men is the very genius of the church itself and is the final test by which we may judge the methods of the work. With it almost any sort of means may bear fruit. Without it, no skillful means nor elaborate equipment will ever make a church. The building and maintaining of such lines of

**Open
church
methods.**

**Principles
of the open
church.**

work for their own sake must ever be a failure, but when they arise naturally out of the spirit of true evangelism the results will more than justify the means.

Rev. Russell H. Conwell, D. D., pastor of the largest and most successful open church in this country—the Baptist Temple, of Philadelphia—says: "The mission of the church is to save the souls of men.

**Mission of
the church
to save.**

That is its true mission. It is the only mission of the church. That should be its only thought. The moment a church admits any singer who does not sing to save souls; the moment a church elects a deacon who does not work to save souls; the moment a church gives a supper or entertainment of any kind not for the purpose of saving souls, it ceases by so much to be a church and to fulfill the magnificent commission that God gave to it." If this is true of the institution that Dr. Conwell represents it is even more applicable to the church in the smaller community, which stands as the sole guidepost to spiritual things.

The Young Men's Christian Association arose at a time when there was a most woeful lack of the true spirit of ministration in the church, and out of the Christ-spirit of evangelism its varied and useful forms of activity came into being. But the Association of to-day, in every large city, has come to be an "institution" in the literal mean-

**The
Y. M. C. A.
an "institution."**

ing of the word. Its weakness is in that, while it has developed a magnificent equipment, it has failed to maintain the old spirit of fellow service—"work *for* young men *by* young men." This weakness is to be overcome in the same spirit that gave birth to the impetus to save men, but it must be overcome, or the work of the Association will continue to be weak at the vital point—that of *saving* men and bringing in the experience of saving other men.

The past year has witnessed a reaction which, if continued, will result in a great increase of spiritual power and evangelistic fervor in the work of this great organization.

CHAPTER X

THE SUNDAY SERVICE.

Whatever else the church may do, it must maintain what is known as the Sunday service if it is to remain the church. This is more true of the towns than the cities. Here many people regard the "meeting" on Sunday as the sum total of the work of the church, and whatever else it may do, its hold on the community will be measured mainly by the efficiency of the Sunday preaching service.

The problems of this service are two-fold: First, to get the people to attend; second, what shall be done after they have come.

To secure attendance is sometimes merely a matter of judicious advertising. Often the service is such as to hold those who do attend and prove to be a real profit, but all is done so quietly that comparatively few are aware of the nearby good that they miss by not attending.¹ Probably the most fruitful feeder of the public service is thorough pastoral visiting. In the close personal relations of the town most people are first induced to come to church because of some personal word of the minister or some enthusiastic worker

**To get
people to
come to
church.**

¹ See Chapter XIX on Church Advertising.

who took the trouble to invite them. But the pastor is limited in time and strength. If he is to do all the inviting, much of it must go undone. He can multiply himself ten-fold though, if he can organize a corps of volunteer visitors who will spend a few hours per week in this work of visiting and inviting people to church. It may be necessary to follow the invitation with a Sunday-morning call in order to avoid the usual evaporation of good resolutions; but this is a small matter if the visitor is of the right metal and is in the work for results.

The ordering of the service after the people are assembled has much to do with the attendance next time. If each new member of the congregation can be made permanent it will not be long till the house will be full. There are three human factors upon which the success of the service depends—the minister, the people and the music.

Most of the treatises in print upon the subject of the work of the minister and his manner of conducting service are so infused with the idea that the minister is a man apart from the people, to be looked up to with reverence (whence his title “reverend”) that they are worthless under modern conditions. In the town, of all places, the pastor had best consider himself not a saint with an incipient halo about his head, but simply one chosen to lead the devotions of his people,

**Conduct of
the service.**

**The
minister
and the
service.**

with whom he stands on common ground. This idea will tend to give him a simple and natural dignity in the pulpit, free from mannerism and sing-song, or from professionalism of any sort. The reading of Scripture and hymns needs vastly more study than it gets. The public prayer is too often a rambling dissertation upon whatever thoughts arise in the preacher's mind at the time. This is not the place for a discussion of the proper performance of these functions of the minister's office. What is needed is a making use of the means already at hand for the cultivation of these important items of the service.

The sermon in a church of this sort has a large field of possible variety, but there are some things that it must not be. It must

The sermon. not be too long. Many a good man cannot get a congregation simply because he persists in preaching so long and so loud that nervous people are tired out before he is done. The matter of preaching receives plenty of discussion in the current church papers, yet if there is a golden road to success, it is still true that few there are who find it. The town is still better than the city in that the appetite for sensationalism is dormant, not aroused, as in a city, where the pulpit has tried to compete with the theater or the daily paper. The Gospel of daily living, the constant pointing of the sinner to the Lamb of God that taketh away the sins of the world, is yet the most effective town preaching.

To select subjects of sermons from the needs of the people visited; to have something to say that the people want to hear, because it stimulates the latent desire to be more Christlike; to say it simply, directly, and earnestly, without attempt at "preaching," and, having said it, to stop, will hold a congregation anywhere.

The order of service is a matter that varies as the idea of worship varies. From the extreme liturgical service to the informal service

**The order
of service.**

of prayer and praise is not a long step if the spirit of real worship is present. The only mistake that is serious is that of following one form so constantly as to wear a rut, out of which it is hard to climb. The informal service is usually well handled in the town, but the impressiveness and true devotion of liturgy is rarely to be found outside of the Episcopal church. Yet a very rich service may be arranged and used in a small church if it is planned with reference to the needs and limitations of the case. The first consideration in such a service is to give the people as much to do as possible. Any service conducted wholly by minister, organist and choir, is a failure in the most essential feature—that of inducing personal participation on the part of the layman. The following service has been prepared and used in a small church, and was most heartily commended by the people as being decidedly helpful in its wealth of suggestion and self-expression:

MORNING SERVICE.

VOLUNTARY.

SINGING, "Holy, Holy, Ho'y" (People standing).

THE COLLECT (Read in concert; remain standing).

Almighty God, unto whom all hearts are open,
all desires known, and from whom no secrets are
hid, cleanse the thoughts of our hearts by the
inspiration of Thy Holy Spirit, that we may per-
fectly love Thee and worthily magnify Thy holy
name through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

SINGING, HYMN (People seated).

READING IN CONCERT.

O come, let us sing unto the Lord:

Let us make a joyful noise to the Rock of our salva-
tion.

Let us come before His presence with thanksgiving.

Let us make a joyful noise unto Him with psalms.

For the Lord is a great God,

And a great King above all gods.

In His hand are the deep places of the earth;

The heights of the mountains are His also.

The sea is His, and He made it;

And His hands formed the dry land.

O come, let us worship and bow down,

Let us kneel before the Lord our Maker,

For He is our God,

And we are the people of His pasture and the sheep
of His hand.

PRAYER, followed by the Lord's Prayer, all uniting.

Anthem or response by choir.

First Lesson.

SINGING, HYMN (People standing).

Second lesson.

SINGING, The Gloria Patri.

Offering.

SERMON.

SINGING, HYMN (People standing).

Response.

Pastor: "The Lord bless thee and keep thee."*People:* "Amen."*Pastor:* "The Lord make His face to shine upon thee, and be gracious unto thee."*People:* "Amen."*Pastor:* "The Lord lift up His countenance upon thee and give thee peace."*People:* "Amen."

Benediction.

Where such a service is new it should be made the subject of an extended comment or a sermon on "the order of public worship," in which the privilege of making every expression one's own is set forth and the people urged to take part earnestly and reverently. Many pastors use such a service in the morning and secure freedom from the tendency to formalism by having a very informal service in the evening, no two Sunday-evening services being exactly alike.

It is most important in the town for the services to begin on time. The writer has been pastor in a town where the church service and the railroad train were the only things that were not behind time.

The minor details of the church and service are of vast importance, or may be made so. The regular presence and efficient service of the ushers is a rare thing, but impresses a stranger more than anything else at his first entrance to the church when he is looking about

Details.

for a seat to slip into before the whole congregation turns around to stare at him. Young lady ushers have been used for the evening

Young lady ushers. service with great success. The refractory old-timer who never went where

shown, but inevitably let the usher walk in dignified silence to the front of the church while he slipped into a seat near the door, probably the usher's own, came to time at once and followed as meekly as a lamb. One mother objected on the ground that while it might be all right at a lecture, the charms of the young ladies were too sacred for the house of the Lord—a weighty reason!

A plan used in many churches, that of having a hand-shake committee at the door to

Welcome at entrance to church. welcome all comers on the way *into* church, has some advantages over the stereotyped hand-shake by the pastor on the way out. A smile and a wel-

come will make the stranger feel at home at once.

In a church known all over town for its chill, the following plan broke the ice completely: A

prayer-meeting was devoted to the subject of sociability in church. Several

Assign pews to hand-shakers. addresses on the subject were followed by a general discussion in which each one, of course, thought that something

should be done to improve the present condition.

Then the pastor asked how many would help.

Many volunteered and each was assigned to a

row of seats, in which the worker was to sit, and, if possible, greet every comer to that pew. Any strangers were to be introduced to the pastor and others. The result was a bee-hive of sociability on the first trial of plan, and "iciness" disappeared from the church at once.

The Sunday-evening service in the town is usually well attended, as the young people must go somewhere—usually to church; if for no better reason, because there is nowhere else to go. If they do not come, then the church must stir up commotion enough so that they will come to see what is happening. This does not involve sensationalism, but it does involve attention to details and an earnest message from the heart to the hearts of those who come. So small a thing as the arrangement of the lights in a church will go far toward the comfort of the congregation.

The janitor. To blink in face of a strong light for an hour is not only disagreeable, but detrimental to the power of attention. To sit in a draft or behind a post is not always conducive to a spirit of worship. Verily, the church janitor has the making and unmaking of the spirit of devotion in his own hands. Than him no more important or long-sought person exists. He is blamed for everything, from the dust on the seats to the sleepiness of the sitters. When a good janitor is found, let his value be appreciated; it is greater than that of rubies; he is more precious than gold

"The People's Sunday-evening service" is a sample of a printed form of service issued by the year and furnished at cost of about a dollar per week in lots of several hundred. It is simply a printed form of service with hymns, responses, announcements and special music indicated—in short, a program for the evening, which, of course, is desirable, though it is doubtful if it alone will work the wonders claimed for it by the publishers. The plan of issuing cards announcing series of sermons, special topics, etc., is discussed under the head of church finances—(Chapter XVIII). The town pastor is frequently annoyed by the constant requests that come from all sorts of itinerant peddlars of some special brand of Gospel wares for a Sunday service in which to present his cause and take a collection. If all are given the favor asked, the pastor will become a stranger to his own congregation and his church will surely wither away. Nothing but a firm hand and sound judgment will guide safely among these annoying trespassers upon the time and patience of pastor and people.

**People's
services.**

**Card
announcements.**

**Ecclesiastical
itinerants.**

It is sometimes a question whether the monthly "union service," in vogue in some places, does not scatter abroad as much as it gathers in. The spirit and practice of unity should be cultivated, but the Kingdom will come sooner if each cultivates well the field

**Union
services.**

committed unto his own charge. The occasional church "bee," in the form of a "union meeting," is good for sociability, but usually for little else.

One pastor found it profitable to give about one-half of his Sunday-evening services to different sub-organizations of the church, the Woman's Missionary Society, the **Evenings with church societies.** Brotherhood, the Young People, and other wings of the church, taking turns in preparing a service. This need not do away with the sermon if the pastor does not care to omit this part of the service, but the advertising, ushering, music, and all details, can be worked up by the society and a short paper or address setting forth some feature of the work of the society in charge of the meeting may be a fitting prelude to the sermon. This plan has the advantage of unifying and solidifying the work of the church and develops responsibility on the part of the laymen.

In times of revival the after-meeting may be made very helpful in the small church, but in the regular service of the church it is **The after-meeting.** often hard to maintain. The pastor should keep a standing invitation to any to tarry after church to discuss questions of personal religion, and should take the initiative with those who do remain. In many Methodist Episcopal churches the class-meeting follows the morning service. If it follows too closely, in the same room, it sometimes causes persons

who do not or cannot remain, to feel shut out. A few minutes' hand-shake between the preaching service and the class-meeting will cure this trouble however. A better cure is to induce all, or nearly all, to remain. This takes vigorous measures. One pastor succeeds by stepping over the altar rail and conducting the testimony meeting himself before pronouncing the benediction.

A Sunday-evening after-meeting in the form of a question box, at the close of the sermon, may be made interesting, especially if the questions are suggested beforehand, or certain persons are apprized of the thought of the coming sermon, so as to be able to frame intelligent questions thereon.

There are some questions that the pastor may wish to present briefly to men alone or women alone, or boys, or girls, that may be handled in a brief after-meeting, asking the particular class wanted to remain for a few minutes. In many ways this few minutes at the close of the regular service may be used by the earnest pastor who has a few workers upon whom he can depend.

CHAPTER XI

CHURCH MUSIC

While music is not worship, it is usually conceded to be the strong right arm of the church service. It can do more to make or mar the beauty and helpfulness of the service than any other secondary factor. The genius of all truly successful church music is in *getting the people to sing*. Song, as a means of self-expression for the common man, is unsurpassed. The hymns of the church are the wings of worship on which the transition is made from the week-day life that the worker brings to church with him, to the spiritual life from whence his help cometh. This being true, any service, no matter how beautiful, that leaves the occupant of the pew to listen in silence while all is sung for him, fails at the highest point. The singing may be better than his own, but unless *he* himself sings, he misses the highest point in true worship. He need not do all the singing, but he must sing. The ideal service would be that in which the entire people could take part in the whole service. This, however, is not possible with a miscellaneous congregation; hence some parts of the music are delegated to singers of special gifts. But any tendency

toward display of personal ability is just so much an injury to the service. The soloist who regards the rest of the service as accessory to his performance had better be dispensed with in short order.

In the nature of things the town church usually has a volunteer choir, and, in favor of this plan, there are many advantages. To successfully conduct and maintain without friction such a choir is a task worthy of a master mind.

What is done everybody knows. "What can be done?" is the question confronting every town pastor, and must receive a separate answer for every varying set of conditions. If anything at all is to be done, the pastor must usually take a very active interest in the music of the church. Often he must be his own chorister, for the reason that no one else has sufficient authority to assign places and parts without giving offence.

The supreme thing that must be done is to cultivate the spirit and practice of singing on the part of the congregation. If frequent urging and emphasis by the pastor will not avail, and the people stop singing to listen to the choir, then let the choir be silent. If the tunes are not familiar, better take an evening a week to learn the tunes. An hour spent after prayer-meeting will sometimes work wonders. In one church the choir was dismissed and, with a single leader, who stood in the pulpit beside the minister, the people soon began to sing vigorously.

While the whole matter of "special" or choir music is a vexed one, the attractiveness of the service may be greatly increased by the use of such materials as may be at hand in the forming of a choir. A chorus choir has the advantage of developing new material and giving the young people something to do. The difficulties of maintaining the organization need no comment here. If the chorus choir is to succeed it must be organized about the personality of one person, who directs and manages the whole matter. Sometimes the organist is that person, sometimes a leader may be found who can maintain order and produce music. If neither of these can be found, then the pastor must lead himself. If the pastor cannot, then further discussion is needless, for the case is hopeless. Not one choir in a thousand has ever succeeded in getting itself together and making music and behaving itself without personal friction—all with no one in command.

There is a very strong feeling prevalent among the majority of devout people that none but Christians should appear in the choir. There is much to be said in favor of this. No congregation would countenance a man in the pulpit who recited the sermon simply as an actor does his part, with no reference to his own personal relation in the case. Why, then, should a singer be allowed to sing a song, the sentiment of which is no part of his own life or experience. In any

event it is disastrous in the town to allow a solo by a person whose morals are known to be at variance with the practice of a Christian life.

The music of children's voices is always available and is always effective with a congregation.

A children's choir may be used with good effect, after a little training.

**Children's
choirs.**

Some excellent voices are to be found in nearly every town Sunday School.

The instrumental music of the small church is usually much underestimated in its importance as a part of the worship. The chapel organ was long ago universal. When well played it may be most effective as an accompaniment to the service. A good cornet player is always a help to the congregation, and if the material is at hand a good orchestra on Sunday evening is a fine addition to the music of the service. The use of mandolins and similar unmusical instruments may be justified on the ground that they are popular, but the Chinese-fiddle sort of music is not in harmony with the dignity of the church service. Where there is a boys' or a girls' band¹ it may be used occasionally to good effect. The effect of some of the oldest hymns, when played by brass instruments in good tune, without drums, is very inspiring. A congregation that will not sing heartily after such a prelude is nearly hopeless.

¹ See Chapter XIII on Boys and Girls.

An undeveloped field lies before the musical pastor in the arrangement of services consisting mostly of music arranged in such an order as to make a very impressive presentation of truth. A service may be made up of old hymns so arranged that new truth will enter the heart by old channels.

**Special
musical
services.**

The exposition of the thought of a hymn may make a very helpful introduction to the service.

If the pastor, or some good musician, can interpret the music of the hymn, the people will usually listen with the keenest of interest.

**Hymn
expositions.**

The adapting of hymns and solos to the subject of the sermon is a much-neglected privilege, but

**Hymns to
fit the
subject.**

is well worth the while of the pastor who would make his service helpful and attractive. Special services, such as communion, baptism, reception of members and the like, may be arranged to consist mainly of music so arranged as to give great impressiveness to the special thought of the hour. The following communion service may serve as a sample: No sermon or word of comment of any sort was given during the entire service. At the close, after a few moments of silent prayer, the people arose and went out quietly, with no formal benediction. It was pronounced by many the most impressive communion they had ever attended.

COMMUNION SERVICE.

ORGAN PRELUDE.

FIRST LESSON, "The Preparation."

HYMN, "When I Survey the Wondrous Cross."

SECOND LESSON, "Paul's Account of the Institution
of the Eucharist."

PRAYER, by Pastor.

THIRD LESSON, "The Passover Eaten."

HYMN, "To Thy Table, Lord, I Come."

FOURTH LESSON, "The Betrayal Foretold."

SOLO, "Come, O Come to Me."

THE SACRAMENT.

COMMUNION HYMN, "Just as I Am."

Last Words of Jesus from John's Gospel.

SOLO, "My Jesus, as Thou Wilt."

Gethsemane, from the Synoptists.

Silent prayer and benediction.

Many such services can be arranged with limited resources. The lesson most needed is that of not wasting time in envying the better resources of larger churches, but, by actively developing those at hand, to make the musical wilderness blossom with the things that can be done where there is the will to do.

A legitimate function of the church choir is that of arranging occasional concerts to be given in the church on a week night. The
Series of concerts need not be sacred and may
concerts. be made a real benefit to the community. The church ought to do at least this much to furnish a counter attraction to the cheap

"shows" that infest the small town. By good management the expenses of such a course can always be met without difficulty. A course has been known to yield a profit merely from collections taken. The "collection at the door" will always yield something. The weekly chorus drill may close with the production of several classic choruses of medium grade that will prove to be valuable from an educational standpoint. Occasionally, as in a Kansas town, some work on a larger scale may be undertaken, such as "Elijah," or the "Messiah." Where such things are possible, no advice is needed here.

Occasionally a chorister of so much ability is secured that the advantages of singing under his direction prove a sufficient inducement to secure a regular attendance on Sunday and at rehearsals. Sometimes the chorister is paid a small sum, to be realized from choir concerts, and he becomes responsible for the music of the choir on that basis.

**Choir
attendance
secured
by lessons.**

CHAPTER XII

THE SUNDAY SCHOOL.

Many a church is considered a problem for which no satisfactory solution has been found, when the key is right at hand in the would-be Sunday School of that church. There is much exaltation of the importance of work with children, but little really effective practice in dealing with the subject.

The key to the Sunday School is the superintendent. The successful superintendent of a certain city school devotes the energy of his life to the supervision of his Sunday School, while he attends to business on week days merely to pay expenses. But this man is rare in the town. Too often he is the man who "has been superintendent of this Sunday School for nigh onto twenty year" and has not been present more than one-third of the time. Yet in how few churches there is not some man or woman who has both ability and adaptability to make a success of the Sunday School if once the needed interest and effort are put into the

The superintendent.

work. From the pleasant greeting to children at the door to the moment when the last one files out, the superintendent will have no moment of respite. The conduct of the school, while in session, will be the smallest part of the work of the most important lay officer in the church. The pastor must sometimes superintend his own school; but his time were better spent in developing a superintendent out of the material at hand. A good beginning would be to place in the hands of the apprentice a copy of some of the excellent publications on the subject. Vincent's "The Modern Sunday School" is a good beginning.

The unit of effective work is the teacher. Whatever the child learns of the lesson he learns from the teacher, and, such is the condition of many homes, that all the child ever learns of right and wrong and eternal things, he learns from the Sunday School teacher. If these teachers can be organized into an active evangelistic force the pastor will soon find a revival on hand all the time. But to get the teacher to realize even a small part of the eternal possibilities of her office is often very difficult. Some sort of a teachers' meeting ought to be possible under almost any circumstances, either on an evening by itself or after prayer-meeting, though this last plan has many disadvantages. A plan that

The teacher.

Teachers' meetings.

has sometimes succeeded for a time is to hold a short, sharp meeting for twenty-five minutes before Sunday School on Sunday. If held on an evening when no other date is scheduled, as often as every two weeks, and when something of real interest is planned for every meeting, there is usually little trouble in keeping up the meetings.

The State Sunday School Associations, in nearly every state in the Union, have on hand a number of publications that set forth methods and schemes that, with local modifications, are applicable to all conditions. The methods known as the "Cradle Roll," the "Loyal Sunday School Army," and the rapidly-growing "Home Department" owe their growth to these organizations.

In every class that is a success there is a spirit of class pride, an *esprit de corps*, that acts as a bond to hold the class together. Many little things help to build up this spirit — a gathering at the house of the teacher on a week evening; an occasional outing of some sort; class exercises before the whole school; a turn at decorating the church for the public service; calls and flowers for the sick members, and, above all, a lively interest on the part of the teacher, to such an extent that when any one of the class is absent she will at once learn the reason and call on the pupil with some

**Class
spirit.**

reminder of the missed lesson. It is needless to say that a teacher who will fail to appear without excuse or substitute, is wholly unfit for the position and can never build a reliable class. The same principle applies to teachers who are frequently tardy. Like teacher, like pupil, in Sunday School.

Occasionally a good teacher appears who has no class. In this case let the teacher go out and gather up a new class. Invite a number of persons who ought to be in the desired class and, from whatever is taken in the net, let the class be organized.

**Forming
new classes.**

Among pupils of the higher grades interest may be awakened by the introduction of Bible study lessons in place of the International Lessons in universal use. This is only possible where the teacher is sufficiently well-versed in the Bible to conduct such a class with interest and profit, and where some pupils can be found who are willing to work.

**Special
Bible
lessons.**

The normal class is possible in any school where a teacher can be found. In a small school this will usually be the teachers' meeting itself. In any school of one hundred it ought to be possible to form a class of young people who will study the lesson a week in advance and hold themselves in readiness to teach any class temporarily without a teacher. If this is done it is better to have a regular sub-

**Normal
classes.**

stitute teacher for every class, and thus avoid the uncertainty that comes from not knowing what class one may be called upon to take sudden charge of.

The greatest means for increase of attendance is the arousing of class spirit sufficient to send each pupil out for scholars for "our

**Membership
contest.**

class." Sometimes, however, a "membership contest" will result in a con-

siderable gain in membership. This has succeeded on the following plan: A credit system is first established, giving for attendance one credit for punctuality, one credit in addition, and for each new scholar secured two additional credits. At the close of a specified time a prize is given to the class earning the greatest number of credits per member, also one to the individual scholar earning the greatest number of credits. This credit system may be extended to cover lessons learned and collections brought, and made a permanent feature of the school by keeping an attractive banner to be presented each Sunday to the class earning the greatest number of credits per member.

The "Attendance Thermometer" has sometimes attracted a good deal of attention. It is built of a board one foot wide and six

**Attendance
thermometer.**

feet high, painted to represent a common house thermometer. A large red ball at the bottom represents the supply of scholars, a narrow slit is cut right across the

central stripe representing the mercury, at the bottom and top, and two ribbons, one red and one white, the main color of the board, are neatly sewed together and passed through the slits, the white ribbon at the top and the red at the bottom. The ends are joined at the back with a piece of elastic to keep the "mercury" tight and allow it to be slid up and down as the attendance may require. The face of the board is now divided into as many degrees as it is thought the Sunday School may possibly come up to, and different points of temperature are indicated in letters on the side of the board. Various inscriptions will suggest themselves to the architect, such as "Zero," "Dead Cold," "Freezing," "Thawing," "Lukewarm," "Summer Heat," "Blood Heat," "Steam Up," "Boiling," etc. The adjustment of the colored ribbon each Sunday at the point reached by the attendance for that day will create a great deal of interest, if attention is called to it, and some different one delegated to do it each time. The construction of the thermometer may be improved for practical purposes by having two points, one for the last Sunday and one for the present day.

Statistical blackboard. A more valuable plan for statistical purposes, is the following. A blackboard is prepared with lines and letters in white paint, thus.

Teacher	Class ¹			
	No.	En.	O.T.	Pr. Col.
Smith	1	5	3	5 20
Jones	2	4	3	3 6
Brown	3	9	6	6 18
Black	4	10	8	9 24
White	5	15	10	12 30
Grey	6	11	4	8 40
Green	7	9	2	8 25
Jenkins	8	20	3	18 55
Dunn	9	14	7	8 20
Debbs	10	7	4	5 25
		104	47	85 2.62
Officers			12	
Total			94	

MONTH.				
En. O.T. Pr. Col.				
1st S.	114	47	94	267
2d S.				
3d S.				
4th S.				
5th S.				
Total				

QUARTER.				
En. O.T. Pr. Col.				
1st M.				
2d M.				
3d M.				

¹The abbreviations at the head of the vertical columns stand respectively for "Number of Class," "Enrolled Scholars," "On Time," "Present" and "Amount of Collection."

By this board the work of the whole school for three months at a time is summed up in plain figures before the school and congregation, and may serve as food for some wholesome reflection.

The work of the primary department is a Sunday School by itself, in every large school, and the more it is made so the better will be the results. In the small school kindergarten methods are nearly always successful if used by a teacher of ordinary

Primary department.

tact and adaptability.¹ The large colored picture and verse cards are now universal and on the whole well adapted to the end sought.

In the general conduct of the school some little things are often of great help. A pretty march may be arranged just before the class-study begins, often while the organist repeats the last hymn sung. If this is done the hymn should be selected with this object in mind. Let the smaller children march clear around the house in some simple figure, to the music, and return in the same or reverse order after class study. Some simple calisthenic drill may be used in Sunday School with excellent effect. The boy will march to music with great delight and will come again for no other purpose than to march again, if the music is good and the march well done.

The march will be much helped if there is a boys' band or a small orchestra in the Sunday School. It frequently requires nothing more than a little energy and interest on the part of some one who can play an instrument and teach others to do so, to have a very creditable band in a short time.² A few instruments are sometimes better than too many. A good violin, flute, cornet, and bass will sometimes prove a most acceptable help in the music of the school.

¹ See kindergarten helps at close of chapter.

² See boys' bands, Chapter XIII.

The success of the home department in the small school must depend on some one person who will be the motive force and see to it that the work is kept up. This, however, is a most efficient scheme for providing sub-pastoral oversight of the shut-ins of various sorts and certainly deserves much more attention than it receives. If no other plan is possible the pastor himself can, as he visits these people on his regular rounds, organize the department and leave the literature for the study of the lesson. This will make the pastor's visit all the more effective, for it will leave a definite work behind for the stay-at-home to do.

The house-to-house canvass of a whole county in a single day has attracted much attention in the past few years and is undoubtedly a good thing. This, however, requires concerted action on the part of many people. The small school can systematically canvass its own territory with equally good results. The essential facts to be learned pertain to the attendance at church and Sunday School, and are set forth on the canvasser's slip, as follows:

**Home
department.**

**House-to-
house
canvass.**

Form A

HOUSE-TO-HOUSE CANVASS

BY THE

County Sabbath School Association

The Lord sent them two and two.—Luke 10: 1.

NOTE—Fill out one card for each family or roomer and retain the card. Leave printed invitation to church and Sunday School. Speak a kindly word and give a hearty verbal invitation in addition to the printed one, wherever you can.

1. Name of family or roomer

.....

2. Residence, Number

.....Street or Road

3. Number in family.....

4. Number under 18 years.....

5. Number in Sabbath School

6. What Sabbath School.....

7. Number of church members

8. What church.....

9. If not a member, what church preferred?

.....

REMARKS—Note on back the names of any persons holding church letters not placed, giving their denominations.

.....

.....

Visitors

District No.....

This house-to-house inquiry has brought hundreds into the school and church who would never have been found by any other plan. Not the least of the good results is the personal interest in the unchurched aroused on the part of the worker himself, who usually finds that he "had

no idea there were so many who never went to church."

The organization of schools in outlying districts is rarely a very difficult process if once the right person be found to take charge.

Outlying schools.

The enterprise may be almost permanently wrecked by appointing the wrong person. One new superintendent secured attendance the first Sunday by furnishing refreshments and a simple program. The next Sunday, Bible stories were given, and soon the regular International Lesson and system of classes found regular attendance. That school is a splendid success to-day. A good singer and a cornet, where there is no chapel organ in the schoolhouse, can work wonders in such a school, and the quarterly school "exhibition" in the shape of a review program is hailed with delight. If no good superintendent is to be had on the ground, sometimes a young man can be found to go out from the home church and give his Sunday afternoons to this missionary field. The country Sunday School is an important event in the lives of these children, who look forward all week to the picture cards and story papers that give them a glimpse of a larger life beyond the cross-roads fence.

If someone has a little artistic skill on the blackboard he may work wonders in creating new objects of interest every Sunday. If he can draw the pictures while the children look on, so much the better.

The regular "review" sometimes degenerates into a very tiresome affair. An old man, while conducting this "weekly" exercise, began to tell something that was very affecting to himself. Johnnie whispered to Sammy: "Whatcher 'spose that ole feller's crying for, anyway?" "Well, I guess," said Sammy, "that if you had to make a speech and had no more to say than he has, you would cry, too."

The review.

The stamp album has been made a fine means of missionary education, by offering prizes for foreign stamps with the best account of mission-work in the country indicated, or by offering the stamps as a prize for the information learned.

Stamps and missions.

The problem of inducing the children to remain to church has perplexed many a pastor. The five-minute sermon before the "more extended discussion" is good, but it were better for the whole sermon to be in terms simple enough for all to follow, for there are more children in mental caliber in the congregation than most pastors have dreamed of.

Children and the church service.

The occasional children's service, if bright and free from cant and platitude, is a most excellent thing. One successful pastor offered prizes for the best report of his sermons, different ages being divided into different classes and prizes offered to each. This

Sermon reports by children.

has advantages with the children and ought to encourage church-going, but has the disadvantage of leaving them to feel that they must be hired to go to church.

CHAPTER XIII

BOYS AND GIRLS

The very heading of this chapter will suggest "a disjointed cross-section of chaos" to many a distracted pastor and teacher who has suffered at the hands of Young America. But aside from a very few vicious boys and incorrigible girls there is no easier class to get good results from than these same noisy and irresponsible people, who are half-way between the child and the man or woman. True, one must not wait too long to begin. When the boy of fifteen or the girl of fourteen overruns all bounds, there has usually been bad seed, or no seed at all, sown earlier in the case.

Object sermons, special talks, children's "lessons" of all sorts, are good—if they *are* good—and should be used in any live church; **Must do something.** but these things do not go to the root of the matter. The young people—never call them "little people" if you love them—must be given something to do. Pious meditation is quite the thing for grandmother, but is a woful failure for Johnny. Not that Johnny does not think, but that he thinks best when doing something, especially when doing something new.

Child studies. The past few years have worked wonders in the researches made in the motives that predominate in the child and youth. *A priori* philosophy of childhood has been wholly discarded, and men have given their lives to an inductive study of the development of the child-mind. The results have been very much to the betterment of our knowledge of ways of doing with children. The child of a dozen years takes instinctively to anything that demands constructive action, and will do a great deal of work if it is put in the terms of his developing consciousness. In two years more he will pass the line between childhood and youth, and will throw overboard what older people have told him is true to set up standards of his own. Every parent and teacher dreads this time in the life of a boy or girl, as he dreads a breaking-up of the old relations. But we miss the most important point in human life if we think this time an unfruitful one, for every result of psychological research in development of religious consciousness estab-

Birth of spirit. lishes one conclusion as beyond all peradventure. That conclusion is this: that seventy-five per cent of conversions occur between the ages of thirteen and seventeen. There is a time in the development of the youth when it is natural for him to become religious. The expanding spirit is ready to be born, and, because that new life is ready to spring into being, there is a period of storm and stress

that we too often mistake for unruly desire or obstinate presumption. The boy is erratic and does unheard-of things. Of course he does! He is trying to find himself in the world of larger life into which he is advancing. His thoughts, his words, even his arms and legs are out of place, and neither he nor any one else knows what to do with them. But this very time is the eve of harvest for the reaper of souls.

The boy-and-girl problem usually begins at about twelve years. The apron-string discipline begins to lose its effect and the picture-card does not keep order in Sunday School any more. What shall be done about it?

The junior societies of different sorts have been successful wherever a person of the right sort of ability has been found to direct the work. But this work, if limited to an hour's meeting per week, can accomplish no more than the Sunday School, and is not needed to take its place. The emphasis of such a meeting should be put upon personal religion in its brightest and most happy forms. Forgiveness and help may be so taught that a child will naturally turn to God, and the coming transition made much more likely to result in a healthy Christian life. Short prayers and testimonies are a real help in leading out the inner-soul life and the growing desire for self-expression, but gloomy pictures of depravity and torture and lurid fires of torment may be well dispensed with.

If the pastor, or any one else, is to do anything with these "people," he must keep in touch with them. There is no substitute for that indefinable something that makes the boys like to be with the pastor or teacher. The secret is mainly in the possession of a young heart; *i. e.*, one that can feel the boy's impulses or share the girl's experiences. This is a good thing for older people to do for their own sakes, as well as for that of the children. Most of the young folks like to shake hands with the preacher, if once they feel that he is merely an uncle, and not the "minister," of whom they are justly somewhat afraid. An evening a month at the parsonage, if rightly conducted, ought to put the pastor and the boys on good terms. The conduct of this evening will depend entirely upon the age of those who come; but, if the worker has the boy's heart he will succeed. If he has not, he had better quit before he begins.

The club idea, in its various manifestations, seems to fill a place in the boy's life. It may take a number of different forms. That of the "boys' brigade" is well known; but, like many other things, depends for its effectiveness entirely upon the method of its administration. Many pastors claim that better results are to be gained by putting emphasis on the industrial arts rather than upon the war spirit, and with some reason. A brigade has been organized with "first aid to the

Not afraid
of the
preacher.

Clubs,
brigades,
secret
societies.

injured" as its central thought, with good results. One town pastor captured the boys completely by organizing a "secret society," with officers, initiation, religious service and other features that made the meetings full of good impressions. This, however, is open to serious objections; it is urged that we have enough of the lodge spirit without developing it in the boys. The "whittling club" has been a great success in some places. It appeals to the love of construction (the boy is not destructive; he is trying to find how it is made) and keeps the ever-present pocket-knife busy. But to make a success, the patron saint must be a whittler himself. Many useful articles may be made by the boys, to their own delight—letter-boxes, ironing-boards, wood-boxes, hanging- and bracket-shelves, footstools, mopsticks, stirring paddles, boats, wooden guns and swords and an infinite variety of articles may be made with great enthusiasm and

**Sloyd
System.**

success. The Sloyd System seems to be the best for this work, as it uses the knife instead of the chisel, and requires no lathe or other machinery. A series of drawings is to be followed and a set of models copied by the boys. Any person with good sense and moderate skill can teach the system after a little study.

A meeting once in two weeks, in the evening, may be devoted to lives of great men, curious objects of nature, or amateur debates. An occasional picnic will add variety,

Debates.

and will likely be far from "a quiet little affair." Club yells and other sounds dear to boyhood will apprise the neighbors that the boys are out—but what matters it? So much the better.

Picnics.

If there is a boy's band there will be great times for picnics and serenades. The man with a boy's heart and a love of the work will find a thousand ways to keep the youngsters busy.

While the "penny provident fund" has not been used in the town, a "boys' savings bank" may be instituted and the lessons of economy and accuracy taught in actual practice.

**Boys'
savings
bank.**

The loan of a dime to "go into business" with is an old plan that sometimes arouses much industry on the part of the boys, who strive to surpass one another in making large increase of the capital invested. The one indis-

**Club
spirit.**

pensable thing in boys' work is a club spirit—a "genius" that makes the boys work and save and shout because it is "our club." To set stakes and expect the boys to fall in with the plan and carry the load like hod-carriers working by the day, is a great mistake and will inevitably soon find the instructor standing alone in an empty club room.

The club for girls must of course work on different lines. But once the right line is undertaken, it may be a great success. A Saturday afternoon sewing-class is often a strong adjunct of the Sunday School. A long list of pretty and useful articles may be made

**Girls'
club.**

and the proceeds of a sale of these, public or otherwise, will keep funds in the treasury. In one place the Boys' Whittling Club and the Girls' Sewing Club joined issues and held a fair from the products of the shop and sewing-room, the earnings going to support an orphan child at school in India. The girls' meetings may be varied by stories and readings, while joint picnics are attractive.

A cooking-class may be arranged for girls and may be made very popular, if supervision can be arranged. The chief requisite is a large
Cooking- kitchen or any large apartment with
class. plenty of table-room and a large stove.

A small fee may be charged for each admittance, to cover cost of materials, or these may be secured by soliciting donations for the purpose. The exercises may be graded by arranging the articles to be made, whether in the sewing-room or cooking-classes, in a series, beginning with those easiest to make and advancing to more difficult work. Certain articles thus become the test of proficiency, and may be made the basis of promotion.

The most beneficial effects of this work are those which are indirect. The kitchen garden is expensive, but it inculcates a much-
Indirect needed respect for the labor of house-
results. work and interest in its processes. The sewing-school not only arouses interest and develops skill in needlework, but the instinct

for home decoration is developed and the child begins to look about for objects of beauty and value. The boys are not only kept out of mischief, but are taught the use of every-day tools and set going toward a condition of mind that regards employment in the useful arts as a desirable thing. To make the boy independent of external conditions for his own entertainment is a blessing.

Further important and indirect results are seen when the club becomes a means to hold the uneasy folks to the church at a time when they begin to want to drift in directions of their own.

The physical element demands recognition, and usually deserves more scientific education

Gymnasium. than it enjoyed under the old dispensation—that of the slipper and the wil-

low sprout. To train those arms and legs into something like a semblance of human form nothing is better than a small gymnasium. This is not at all beyond the possibilities of the small church. A vacant room of good size anywhere may be fitted up at small expense, and a world of good be gotten out of it. The apparatus needed to start with may be very simple. A set of clubs and bells, a "horse" and a set of parallel bars will do nicely for a large variety of work. Nor need a trained instructor be secured in order to succeed. Any man can learn and teach a good dumb-bell or Indian-club drill, and a number of simple but attractive exercises on the

horse and bars. Books may be had that furnish all the information needed, and the cuts are so explicit that no help is required to master the exercises set forth. The swinging trapeze, boxing-gloves and foils are excellent things to leave out. A girls' class may be conducted with good results, but this requires much more caution than does the boys' class, and should rarely be attempted without some training in gymnasium work on the part of the instructor.

Through these and other means adapted to the work it is possible to develop a church for boys and girls that will be much more than a mere side-attachment to the old folks' church. The very energy and restless drive of the boy is just what the church needs to keep it young and to keep it awake, and three-fourths of its accessions must come from these very boys and girls. Is it not worth while, then, to spend some time and money in developing methods that will reach and hold and save the girls and boys?

There is a feature of work with boys and girls that is sorely neglected everywhere. That the town is notoriously immoral is a fact, but that the fountain-head of this sin of sensuality may be best quenched in the child-life is not well understood. The pastor with wisdom and discretion may do a world of good by a series of talks to boys, warning them against the physical sins into which boys are so

**Church
for boys.**

**Personal
purity.**

liable to fall. A number of books are now in print on this subject. A good plan is to keep on hand a supply of some wisely-worded pamphlet and give a copy to growing boys where needed.

The White Cross Society is organized about a pledge which every member is required to take.

The pledge may be used as an adjunct to the boys' club or a Sunday School class, without organizing a separate society for the purpose.

**White Cross
pledge.**

The pledge is as follows:

I,, promise, by the help of God:

- I. To treat all women with respect and to endeavor to protect them from wrong and degradation.
- II. To endeavor to put down all indecent language and coarse jests.
- III. To maintain the laws of purity as equally binding on men and women.
- IV. To endeavor to spread these principles among my companions and to try to help my younger brothers.
- V. To use every possible means to fulfill the commandment, "Keep thyself pure."

When printed on a card this pledge may be used in connection with a lecture explaining the subject. This should be done at least once a year. The work of precaution thus inaugurated will prevent the ruin of many a boy's life, for the wholesale cause of most of the ruin of young men is ignorance of the consequence of such wrongdoing. Many men have confessed to the

author that they had no idea of the consequences of what they were doing till those consequences were upon them.

But the greatest problem is not the problem of the thirteen-year-olds. It is the problem of their mothers and fathers. Every worker of Mothers and fathers. experience has been driven to distraction to find that while the child-mind received the seed in good soil, the home-influence uprooted it all too soon and sowed the tares of loose thinking and ungodly living. It is really not difficult to save the children if the home-influence is of the right sort; but in the majority of cases it is all but hopeless to expect results. Here is the great waste in human progress toward the spiritual life. The parents of one generation fail to impart to their children the wisdom and experience that life has taught them, and another generation must climb up by the same old, slow path that the fathers trod. Were one generation of fathers and mothers to spend its chief energy in the rearing of the children to live godly lives, the problems of human advancement would be settled in a half-century. Once the church turns its supreme effort, not to the reclaiming of the life-ends of men whose best years are gone in sin, but to bringing the children into the experience of the Christian life at the time when the very child-nature all tends toward producing such a transition, a new era will dawn and a few generations will see the church filling the whole earth.

CHAPTER XIV

YOUNG MEN AND WOMEN

In the reaction from the old people's church of the early nineteenth century there has been much of a maudlin sentimentalism in our attitude toward the young men and women of the church. The value of youth to the church has not been overestimated, but the methods used to secure the needed co-operation have sometimes indicated a "second youth" on the part of the patronizing people who inwardly conclude that what cannot be cured in the young people's movement must be endured as best it may. But the young people's meeting is here, and here to stay. How shall we make it a success? The form of organization of the Christian Endeavor and of the different denominational societies gives abundant room for the use of any methods that are essential to success.

The conduct of the Sunday-evening meetings is in itself a problem that is freely and fully discussed in the papers devoted to the interests of these societies. To reproduce this discussion here is impossible as well as needless. The greatest danger is that

**Maudlin
sentiment.**

**Machinery
simplified.**

too much will be attempted. The machinery of the movement is so complex that a large force is needed to carry on even a part of it, and it is sometimes better to concentrate the power at hand upon a few agencies than to let it become too widely scattered. Some of these complicated plans may be much simplified to advantage in some cases. For instance, the reading-course may be too heavy to handle with the facilities at hand, when a short course made up of well-selected tracts would prove entirely feasible and most profitable.

The organization of outlying mission-stations is an excellent method of developing young people as leaders and workers. The over-
Outlying flow of life must find expression
stations. somewhere, and, if it can be turned into the extension of the Kingdom of Heaven, the returns may be large. Here, as everywhere, the *sine qua non* of success is in the leader. There is no substitute. A prayer-band of young people pledged to intercession together with the pastor may be a mighty engine for the pulling-down of strongholds and building-up of the church. A quartette of young men who can sing may do most effective evangelistic work. If the sub-pastor can organize such a band he has a mighty power at hand for extension work

The subject of social work among young people is so important that a separate chapter is assigned to it.

It frequently happens that the work with and for young women is well cared for, while the young men are in evidence only as escorts for the ladies. The church for men is yet to be developed in many places. Seventy-five per cent of many congregations are women. Often the pastor cannot make out whether there are any men among the feathers and ribbons of his congregations or not. The cause of this often is not far to seek. The pastor is a lady's man. He slips from his mother's lap into the school and seminary and, finding the majority of his first charge to be women, and the men hard to get at, he accepts the inevitable, and his preaching, his pastoral work, the very pathetic tone of his voice, are adapted to the condition of the woman's mind. The emotional is exalted at the expense of the ethical, till men who do come to church, from sense of duty or persuasion, go away with an excusable idea that the church is for women and children. Now a good woman is as well worth saving as a man, but the man is worth while, too; and, once the methods of work are adapted to him as they are to his sister or wife, he is as easily reached. A tearful tale may not bring out a perfumed handkerchief, but the fearless presentation of a Manly gospel and the teaching and living of the manliest of all men who ever lived, will appeal to the heart of the average man. The man is really no worse in his living than the woman. He is not to be reached by

**A church
for men.**

the dogmatism and ecclesiasticism of an ideal that makes the minister something apart from ordinary life because he is "holy" in some peculiar sense. The epitaph on the tombstone of the cowboy preacher was suggestive—"A Parson, but a Man." The average man has no objection to the minister provided he is also a man; nor has he any antipathy toward the church, provided it is manly and fearless.

The impression that peculiar gifts are necessary in order to work with men is astray of the truth.

Like many other "gifts," the main ingredient is a willingness to undertake the work and a relish for it. Love for men will settle the question of adaptability nearly every time. A study of the methods of preachers who do reach men will furnish abundant suggestion. The fearless presentation of the problems of practical life from the standpoint of the Christ-life will attract a man every time. This will necessitate the omission of the rainbow-flowers-moonlight-golden-weeping passages that seem to be the pride of some pulpits, and will make unnecessary the beautiful poetical excerpt; but the sermon will be all the stronger, if it is in terms of life instead of theology or sentiment.

In the prosecution of work for men the Brotherhood has come to take a prominent place. And this may be justly so when we consider the dozens of women's societies of all sorts within the church. True, the

**The Gospel
for men.**

**The
Brother-
hood.**

men are invited to become various sorts of contributing brothers-in-law, but this does not meet the case. The lodge and club have depopulated the churches for the reason that there is something that a man wants that the lodge supplies and the church fails to furnish. The Brotherhood aims to supply this missing factor. Its forms vary from the simple organization having two or three officers and merely gathering together the men for whatever work is to be done, to a full-fledged fraternity with secret sessions, initiations and benefits. The Brotherhood of St. Paul is as elaborate as any organization, and from this to the most simple the variations may be found. The Brotherhood is entirely practicable in a small church. It may be organized in a Sunday-School class, among the men of the Epworth League of Christian Endeavor. Four young men or more may be a working nucleus, about which may be builded the results of their ingathering. The two rules, that of prayer and that of service, are the foundation of the Brotherhood of Andrew and Philip. To concentrate the efforts of young men upon the work of winning other young men to Christ and to the church is the secret of remedying the present unbalanced condition of the church.

The men's Sunday-evening Club has been a success in the city church, but the writer has yet to hear of it succeeding in a small church. Its tendency there is to make one more society, where the Brotherhood would do the work better.

The men's prayer-meeting has been a useful innovation in many large churches. If not practicable in the small church, a men's **Men's meetings.** meeting can nevertheless be held once in a while with good results. The address may be to men, and women urged to invite the men to attend; or the women may be excluded for once and men only allowed to be present. This form of service is sometimes met by an unexpectedly large attendance. It may be held on Sunday afternoon, or it may take the place of the regular Sunday-evening service.

Whatever work the church does of educational value will probably be among the young men and women of the church. There are few **Educational classes.** towns in which there is not an open door of opportunity of this sort. Two or three good night-classes in such fundamental subjects as the young people seem to most need can be arranged to meet in the lecture-room of the church, if such a room exists, or in the house of some pupil or teacher. It is always possible to arrange for volunteer teaching of such classes, but a small fee should be charged for entrance to the course or there will not be sufficient interest to keep up attendance. Classes in bookkeeping, business arithmetic, grammar and composition, shorthand, mechanical drawing, penmanship, history, civil government, vocal music and a number of other subjects will find teachers willing to give an evening or two per week for the love of

humanity, and many a young man whose opportunities have been few will rejoice in an open door to a larger life. This, of course, may be Brotherhood work.

A Western church has organized a "reading college" in which regular students are enrolled and systematic courses pursued, examinations given and certificates of work granted. This should be possible in many towns on a modified scale.

Reading college.

The subject of physical work sometimes appears formidable, but need not be so. The gymnasium is much more difficult to handle in practice with young men than with boys.

Physical work.

To properly conduct a gymnasium and control the elements attracted thereto requires a man of special training for the work. To secure such an assistant is difficult in a small church. Where he is to be had, various forms of work may be undertaken; but with such assistance, advice is not needed. Mrs. Charlotte Edholm says that the gymnasium is to take the place of the dance. Under proper conditions this may be true. Athletics are here to stay: Can we make them Christian?

There are other sorts of physical work that are more easily controlled with the resources likely to be at hand in the town. Bicycle clubs, base-ball clubs and outdoor athletics of all sorts may be practicable if the danger of Sunday desecration can be avoided.

Out-door clubs.

Where the Brotherhood has a nucleus of young men who are manly and capable and enthusiastic in the work, it may be possible to establish a club-room somewhere about the church, which, when suitably furnished, may be kept open several nights during the week for the use of members and friends. The success of this will inevitably depend on the sort of men who are at the head of the work. A few affected or unreliable members will give the institution a bad name in short order.

The organization of a lecture course gives large opportunity for culture facilities in many towns. A little managerial ability and effort will reap large results in this direction. Organization and systematization are the secret of success in many cases where, to attempt to do anything piecemeal, would result in failure. The plan of a course-ticket, as outlined in Chapter XVIII, on "Finances," has all the advantages and few disadvantages in practice. The money is in hand, the dates and speakers are engaged, the course advertised—all before the first lecture, and the worker may enjoy the good things with the rest.

There is at least one form of work that every pastor can engage in, that is the formation of a young men's Bible class. This may become a means of independent study in some cases. One pastor organized such a class from high-school students for a course in Christian sociology; another, from similar

**Men's Bible
classes.**

material, conducted a class in the English Bible. Both met at the time of the regular Sunday School. Such work establishes a hold upon the men that may be a strong lever for good.

If this chapter is devoted mainly to work with men it is because, in the town church, the women are so far in the majority now that it is time that attention were turned toward bringing the number of men up to a fair proportion.

CHAPTER XV

THE PRAYER-MEETING AND BIBLE STUDY

If the "prayer-meeting is the spiritual barometer of the church," it is to be feared that the read-

Prayer-meeting a barometer. ings are abnormally low for many churches of the towns. There is, perhaps, no service of the church where

there is so much danger of getting into a rut as in the prayer-meeting, especially if the pastor leads it every time. Then, long-winded good people are likely to drift in this direction, till too often the prayer-meeting is the old folks' meeting. The "cure" of the prayer-meeting in some

Change of program. cases has been in a constant change of program, by which a new feature of some sort has been introduced each evening. To keep up the supply of new things is a tax upon a man, but it can be done.

The practice of considering the Sunday-School lesson for next Sunday has its advantages and disadvantages and will wear a groove

Question-box. for itself if not watched. If details are avoided and the devotional parts of the lesson singled out for presentation, good may come. A "question-box" occasionally is of interest, if sufficient interest can be aroused to

ask questions. A little personal solicitation will usually produce inquiries enough to keep the pastor busy. One pastor tried a service composed of thirty minutes each of prayer service, song service and social gathering, changing the order on each night. This filled the room.

**Prayer,
song and
social.**

A very profitable training-school may be conducted by taking up each night one question pertaining to the doing of Christian personal work and discussing it in its bearings upon Scripture and experience. "What would you say to a man who says that he feels no need of a Saviour?" "What Scripture have you found helpful in meeting the objection that the Bible does not teach the eternal loss of the wicked?" and many others furnish an inexhaustible fund of material for such discussion.

**Training-
class
questions.**

Ten minutes each evening may be devoted to a normal drill, taking up the canon, authors of the Bible, structure of books and other subjects of fundamental importance, yet about which so little is commonly known.

**Normal
drill.**

A number of side-issues may be made attractive—an occasional hymn exposition, accompanied by a good solo; a ten-minute description of some cathedral, or oratorio, or place in the Holy Land, by someone who has been there; the review of some devotional book; a visitor from some neighboring

**Special
features.**

church, or other similar features may be used as secondary attractions. Some one feature every evening will give variety and interest to the service.

The great attraction about the prayer-meeting must ever be its devotional value. If it is so conducted that those who come are lifted
Devotional Godward, they will come again, unless
value. the Godward impulse in them is dead-
 ened by other things, which is generally the explanation of small attendance at prayer-meeting.

The conduct of the meeting itself is important. A shiftless any-way-will-do manner on the part
Conduct of the leader is disastrous to the life of
of the the meeting. Some stay away for fear
meeting. that they may be called upon suddenly
 to take part. Great tact is needed to handle each case in just the right way. Some should not be called upon for sudden service. Announce a hymn, and that Brother Smith and Sister Brown will lead in prayer at the close of the hymn. Urge voluntary participation, so far as is possible to secure results therefrom, and let it be understood that the meeting belongs to the people, not the pastor. In the case of people who talk too much for the good of the meeting, there is no remedy comparable with that of going to them personally and kindly but firmly telling them that, for the good of the meeting, it must be stopped. This takes a little nerve, but that is what the pastor is for. To flinch is to fail.

The Bible study of the prayer-meeting may be focused on the learning from memory of a number of passages that are especially applicable to daily life and for use in dealing with the unsaved or backslidden. Some of the pamphlets included in the list at the close of the chapter make excellent texts for a course of this kind.

**Memory
Bible
drill.**

This Bible study may be expanded into a "Bible Training School," held two or three evenings per week for a month or more. The following program of such a course indicates the nature of the work.

**Bible
Training
School.**

BIBLE TRAINING SCHOOL

Jonesville M. E. Church

7:30 p. m.

PROGRAM

Jan. 10. Monday.

- I. Lecture, "Methods of Study."
- II. 8:15. Training School. Selection of subjects for final reports.

Jan. 12. Wednesday.

- I. 7:30. Lecture: "Poetry of the Bible."
- II. 8:00. Training School. Reference work.

Jan. 17. Monday.

- I. 7:30. Lecture: "The Bible and Christian Experience."
- II. 8:00. Training School. Bible marking. Memory work. Question-box.

Jan. 19. Wednesday.

I. 7:30. Lecture: "Old Test. Prophecy."

II. 8:00. Training School. Analysis. Text Study. Exegesis.

Jan. 24. Monday.

I. 7:30. Lecture: "The Gospels."

II. 8:00. Training School. Great men. Memory drill. Question box.

Jan. 26. Wednesday.

I. 7:30. Lecture: "Acts."

II. 8:00. Training School. Great doctrines. Reports.

Jan. 31. Monday.

I. 7:30. Lecture: "Pauline Epistles."

II. Training School. Great Experiences. Reports.

Feb. 2. Wednesday.

I. Lecture: "General Epistles."

II. Training School. Memory work. Reports.

Feb. 6. Monday.

The Conclusion of the Whole Matter.

The lectures of the course were, in this case, delivered by different ministers and Bible students of the town and vicinity, while the training-school work proper was in charge of the pastor. Each regular student was held accountable for the preparation and presentation of a paper upon some topic chosen from a list posted in the class-room. The list contained about fifty topics covering most of the phases of experimental religion and the simpler topics of Biblical research. The following may serve as examples:

God the Father	Power
Jesus a Saviour	Peace
The Comforter	Victory in Believing
Sin	Repentance
Forgiveness	Prayer
Witness of the Spirit	Testimony, etc.
Joy of Believing	

The "Conclusion of the Whole Matter," on the last evening, was a written examination, though not announced as such.

The young Christians' meeting has much to commend it. While these babes in Christ need the counsel and experience of older persons, they feel timid in their presence, but in a service of their own they may often be induced to take a more active part than when others are present. A short normal course on the Bible will usually be most welcome to these new converts, who are hungry for the word of truth and will often do work of a surprising degree of efficiency.

For all timid people some form of previously assigned participation is helpful. This may take the form of readings, questions to be answered, references to be verified, promises secured to pray or testify and in many other ways. At the same time it may be well to hang out, occasionally, the sign used by one pastor: "Come in at any time. No one will be called upon to take part."

Young
Christians'
prayer-
meeting.

Assigned
participa-
tion.

Punctuality, equality and preparation will make a good meeting where there be few or many; but the benefits to those who do not attend are slight.

A series of progressive expositions of some book or books, or series of subjects, may arouse interest. Great interest was in one case aroused by the simple reading of large portions of Scripture with no comment other than the setting-forth of the author's purpose and the circumstances of his writing. Most of the Epistles were read in this way to the great enlightenment of all who came. Variety was introduced into the reading—sometimes in concert, sometimes one alone, sometimes alternately, etc. Again the chapters of the book to be read next time may be assigned to individuals to be read with a statement of subject written about.

Progressive expositions.

Reading entire books.

The family idea in the prayer-meeting is invaluable. If once well grounded it solves the prayer-meeting problem itself. How to bring this about is the question; for, in some way, not only the mothers but the fathers and children must be brought into the prayer-meeting, and the service made one in which everyone may feel free from restraint, before it can fill its rightful place.

The family idea.

In many scattered communities, the cottage prayer-meeting may be very useful. If a few families in a locality combine and hold a meeting

at one of the houses, at which the pastor may or may not be present, a center of religious life is maintained, where otherwise there would be little help in the exercise of Christian graces. One pastor for a few weeks stopped his meeting at the church and, instead, organized a half-dozen meetings on the regular prayer-meeting night in different parts of his field, to be led by laymen. The worker at whose house the meeting was to be held was made responsible for attendance, music, etc., and went about inviting to the meeting at "my house," which gave a personal turn to the gathering and secured a good attendance. Afterwards all were again gathered in at the church, and with new faces gained in the campaign. To make religion homelike is a great aid in gaining access to people's hearts. The cottage prayer-meeting goes far toward doing this, and is feasible in the smallest communities. In times of revival, the afternoon meeting may often be profitably distributed in this way among the people, with good results upon the night-meeting attendance at the church.

Cottage
prayer-
meetings.

CHAPTER XVI

SOCIAL WORK

**Social life
of the
town.** While few of us now regard the social nature of man as an evil to be endured, many of us are still wondering how we shall cure the abnormal tendencies that so often crop out therefrom. This problem reaches its climax in the town. The Saturday-night dance, the cheap "show," the persistent "whist club," do not, as in the city, affect a small circle, but almost the whole population of the town, which finds social recreation in these gatherings. Since we cannot close these affairs nor divert the social tendencies that cause young people to frequent them, the remedy of the ascetic is usually proposed by the older people of the church, who have outgrown their early experiences and cannot see why the young people are so foolish as to want to do such things. But while asceticism has drawn a few strong souls, it has never proved a good plan to save the world by, and never will till human nature undergoes a radical transformation.

In the meantime, since our Father saw fit to endow man with a social nature, it is incumbent upon the church of the town to develop a social

life about it that shall be so wholesome and good and helpful that what is an agent of evil at present in too many cases, may become a minister unto life, because inspired by the Christ-life. This work must begin at the house of the Lord. An atmosphere of sociability about the regular Sunday service is the beginning of all true social life in the church. The hand-shake, not by the pastor (who is considered as being paid to do it), but by happy and earnest people who have the spirit of welcome in their hearts, will prove the social center for the extension of the work.

It is frequently possible for one church, or for several churches to combine and conduct a small reading-room "down town." This is a good thing and really not very difficult to manage if its financial system is that of regular monthly contributions and not pay-entertainments nor "socials." The advantages of the plan are numerous. If the church is so situated that the reading-room can be conducted in a side room, with a few games for diversion, so much the better. If directly connected with the church it is usually better to run it upon a membership basis than to leave the quarters open to all comers. This is done in many small churches with entire success.

The social life of the church must be something broader than the four walls of a reading-room, however. The church "social" of the usual

**Social
life
about the
church.**

**Public
reading-
room.**

sort, which too often is conducted "for revenue only," is subject to serious objection.

Some churches have succeeded in keeping open house in the church itself for one evening per week through the winter months. The Ladies' Aid Society, the Christian Endeavor, or Epworth League, the Sunday School and other societies of the church have taken turns at providing the program for each evening, after which an informal social with games and song passed the closing hour of the evening. Occasionally the pastor or some other individual may take an evening, and a short lecture on some topic of interest may be given. Every such program may be not only entertaining, but instructive, if it is to serve the highest ends. Evenings with various authors, geographical excursions, trips around the world; stereopticon lectures of all sorts may be made to pay tribute to these social evenings.

Where so elaborate a system is not possible and the pastor and wife must take the initiative in the work, the pastor's evening at home has proved a great success. One pastor announced a regular Monday evening at the parsonage, to which all were invited who cared to come. No refreshments were served, but some sort of social program was provided each time by a committee appointed two weeks ahead for the

Open
house
one night
per week.

Monday
evening
at the
parsonage.

purpose. This proved a thoroughly workable plan, for one season at least.

A Kansas pastor, on taking charge of a church in a small town, found a fairly good young people's society, but soon learned that

**Work cure
for the
dance.**

there was also a thoroughly active Friday-night dance and that the patrons of these diverse institutions were the

same people. What should be done? After careful thought the pastor decided that he would not say a single word against dancing, for the present, but began at once to systematically put each member of the Endeavor Society to work at some form of social or intellectual improvement. In less than a year the dance closed for good, and the new work outlined received a hearty support.

The complaint of unsociability about the church may be due to the timidity or unsociableness of the complainer. It is well to occasionally call attention to the fact that when "no one will speak to me," there is usually something the matter with "me."

In a certain Methodist Church there was complaint of lack of social greeting after the morning service. Inquiry revealed the fact

**Give a
chance to
be sociable.**

that the class leader arose immediately after the benediction and began the class-meeting, thereby compelling all

present to at once cease the exercise of Christian greetings and sit down, or leave the church

and go home, which most of the people did. By simply calling the leader's attention to the fact, and asking him to wait a few minutes, and then announcing from the pulpit that ten minutes would be allowed for hand-shaking and a welcome to friends and strangers, the alleged coldness entirely disappeared and the entire atmosphere of the church became cordial and Christian.

It is, of course, true that where the spirit of the Lord is, there is the highest form of sociability, but it is also true that the intense unsociability of some churches becomes a mighty non-conductor of divine power, and the spiritual currents might be greatly cleared if the stagnant social life were quickened into motion. So interwoven are the threads of the higher life that spirituality and sociability run into each other at every turn.

CHAPTER XVII

THE REVIVAL

The theory has been advanced that the ideal church should advance with an undisturbed movement, as evenly as the oncoming of the day. But it is not thus in any part of God's world. Day and night follow each other; all organic growth is by waves and seasons; the harvest-time can come only after the sowing. The mighty movements in the world of spiritual life and power that appear on earth as revivals, are the culminating points of these times of accelerated growth, and the divine hand may be traced through the ages in these outbreaks of men crying after the living God. Every true heart is continually looking for the oncoming of the season of refreshing from the presence of the Lord, and, when it comes, gives it the complete right of way in the church. While it lasts all else must be secondary, and to "precipitate decision" is the supreme work of the hour.

All growth by waves and seasons.

The revival in the small church must begin with the pastor. It is rarely ever well to import an evangelist to begin a meeting, though he may often be called in later to assist, with excellent results. But

Begin with the pastor.

how shall the work be done? There is certainly no diminution of the supply of divine power. The Lord of Hosts is with us in increasing manifestation with the oncoming needs of life; and this revival, as every other, will be in the direct operation of the Holy Spirit through human agencies. And here is the problem of problems—the arm of the flesh. A materialistic psychology of a half-century ago divided the human faculties into “sections with partitions” between, and arranged them as definite possessions of different sizes and powers. Hence arose the idea in the minds of many pastors that certain parts of the work of the ministry were theirs by peculiar adaptation; that others must be avoided for lack of special gifts. Many a man has said: “I am a pastor and, because of my limitation, I cannot do the work of the evangelist among my people.” But a principle has now gained acceptance among psychologists that, when once understood, will effectually destroy this vicious idea. That there are natural gifts no one will deny. But what has been long regarded as a great “natural gift” has often turned out to be nothing other than a strong liking for and enjoyment of the work indicated. With the turning of interest in another direction, wholly new “gifts” have been discovered, to the great profit of the discoverer. Nowhere has this false principle done so much damage as in the idea gained by many pastors that they could not become

great winners of souls, for lack of gifts, when the only lack was that of an inclination to undertake the work. Many a pastor has gone on for years leaving to others the reaping of the fruit of his sowing, to discover late in life that he could have done it better himself.

A glorious privilege it is to face the opportunities of the new century, for we may even now feel the life of the oncoming wave of the greatest revival earth has known. That the last decade of the nineteenth century witnessed the churches in the hollow of the wave, no one denies. But what caused the decline of the rate of increase? In the first place, many pastors have been content to exercise the gifts of instruction and to leave dormant those of evangelism. The need of the church is for a mighty force of pastor-evangelists who will cause the old revival fires to light up every valley and hilltop with a blaze of salvation. In the second place the methods of the new century must be born in the throes of human need and touched by the power of a new Pentecost; and then the revival will be here.

And what a revival it will be! Not a saving of "souls" merely, but a saving of men in all that the term implies. The Son of Man will be admitted into human life in a larger and more glorious sense than ever before. More human beings will become

**Decline of
rate of
increase.**

**The coming
revival.**

subjects of the Kingdom than in any previous revival that earth has known. It will be a world-revival. Now that the world has become acquainted with itself and is beginning to suspect that all men are human, the Gospel will fill the earth in a way that will make of it a different world, and a better. To touch the channels of trade and purify them as Jesus did the temple, when corrupted by dishonest practices; to leaven the political life of the world till its kingdoms shall become the Kingdom of the Son; to become the very air of freedom to the human spirit and of salvation for all men—this will be the work of the twentieth-century revival!

The new revival will be at short range. Not thousands gathered in meetings addressed by one man on a big salary, but tens of thousands reached in the ministrations of an awakened church that sends its workers into every corner of human life. The pastor must lead this revival. The imported specialist cannot organize and adapt forces for a work that shall permeate the very structure of society itself and make it Christlike. When the organization is a living one, the seed sown, the harvest white, then the man who has made a specialty of leading souls through the valley of decision may assist to good advantage. But let the pastor stand as the God-appointed leader of his own forces to victory, and the discouragements of a "very peculiar field" will disappear.

**New revival
at short
range.**

There are right ways and wrong ways in conducting a revival as well as in anything else. A good beginning is to get that invaluable book, "The Revival and the Pastor," and read it through. Much of it is inapplicable in any but large churches, but much of it fits anywhere.

How to begin.

When the term revival is used, some good brother at once says, "All right, pastor; let's hold a meeting," meaning thereby for

The wrong kind.

the pastor or the evangelist to preach every night, while the members sit by to see what will come of it. The preacher is put upon the platform like a combatant to fight the battle with the devil, and the members stand by to comment on how he gets on with it, and to see whether he will "get anything done." The meeting over, things settle back as of yore, and the dead-level is uninterrupted till the next special effort. The demoralized condition of many town churches is due largely to the intermittent program of high-pressure meetings and succeeding relapses. The revival from above, led by the Holy Spirit through men of sense, always builds up a church, but many sections of the "vineyard of the Lord" have been burnt over by "meetings" of quite another kind, till a healthy growth is under adverse conditions.

It may be at first difficult to get the members of the church to realize that they themselves may

be used as direct agents in the revival, but this is but the great reason why they should see the truth of the statement. If one individual can be made to feel that the responsibility for the saving of some certain man or woman depends on him, the revival is assured.

**Lay
workers.**

Much use can be made of consecrated lay material. Prayer, testimony, dealing with seekers, invitation to meetings, and somewhat of exhortation, may all be contributed by the members to their own quickening and the edification of the service; provided, however, that all is under perfect control of the pastor. Better far one man of ordinary talent, under control, than ten of unusual ability who cannot be managed.

The pastor need not preach every night. This plan has been used by the writer with success: Monday evening, a meeting devoted to the higher Christian life, testimonies and a short address and exhortation from the pastor; Tuesday evening, a sermon; Wednesday evening, a general praise service; Thursday, a sermon; Friday night, a young folks' meeting, in which the Sunday School and the new converts are given right of way. Or again, a topic-card has been printed for the week, taking a series from the parables. The pastor spoke each evening, but the preliminary twenty minutes of song and prayer were in charge of some consecrated layman. In the carrying on of a meeting in this

manner, the preliminary work of the training class and the band of those who have covenanted with the pastor to pray for the conversion of some one soul, will be of immense value.

It is usually best not to try to run at once a "big" meeting. The mistake some make is to

Small beginning. start out on a large scale, having in mind meetings held by great evangelists, and to bring in at once so

many unconverted persons that the power of the service is weakened thereby. It is better to have in a small room fifty Christians and ten unsaved persons than to have in a large room fifty Christians and one hundred unsaved people. The results will be greater in the former case. Prayer and interest and conviction must be focused on a few definite souls if the revival is to break out. When once the fire has come down, the work may spread and the people of God may become so much encouraged that many more hearts may be reached. One soul thoroughly won and fully conscious of pardon will so inspire the little church, that the question of attendance will often take care of itself from that time on.

CHAPTER XVIII

CHURCH FINANCES

"To pledge, or not to pledge! That is the question.
Whether it is nobler in a man to take
The gospel free, and another man foot the bill,
Or sign a pledge and pay toward the church expenses!
To give, to pay—aye, there's the rub—to *pay*!
When on the free pew plan, a man may have
A sitting free and take the gospel, too,
As though he paid, and none be aught the wiser,
Save the society's committees, who—
Most honorable men—can keep a secret!
To err is human; human, too, to buy
At cheapest rate, I'll take the gospel so;
For others do the same—a common rule
I'm wise: I'll wait, not work; I'll pray, not pay,
And let the other fellow foot the bills—
And so with me the gospel's free, you see!"

REV. J. D. McMILLAN, D.D.

That few pastors regard financial matters as the greatest problem of the church may indicate several things. Either the pastor is devoted to "higher" interests of the church, or he takes little interest in finances, or he is pastor of one of those delightful parishes where such matters are handled wholly apart from any concern of the minister.* Many a good man, in the vexation of

*Among all the answers received to the question, "What do you regard as the greatest problems of your church," in no case was pre-eminence given to financial problems.

his righteous soul, has felt that if all financial interests could be forever divorced from the functions of his calling, not only would the burden roll off from his own shoulders, but the whole car of salvation would run much lighter.

The town pastor certainly has his full share of tribulation of this sort; but the history of endowed churches and self-supporting pastors does not furnish very brilliant testimony to the success of the plan.

The financial cross.

Further, there is a vital connection between material goods and fruitful faith that needs emphasis, if the highest point of efficiency is to be reached in the Christian life. The medieval mendicant considered all property as the possession of the devil, and poverty as the choice of the child of God. The doctrine of Jesus, however, was very different. God's servant is the steward of God's property, and the use of dollars and lands and business is a vital function of the Christian life. No salvation that leaves a man's financial interests out of account can ever claim to be the salvation of Jesus of Nazareth. This very question that so troubles the pastor, is vitally related to the very health and vigor of the Christian soul and the local church.

Nor are the problems of finance impossible of solution. So much of slipshod method and inefficient administration has crept into the church, that religion and poverty are yet

sometimes regarded as synonyms. The minister is discounted and dead-headed and donated till he is regarded as an object of charity, all on the ground that "the preacher never gets his pay, of course."

The minister an object of charity.

No business man would permit his clerks to be favored on such grounds, nor will any church that has a decent amount of self-respect.

The key to the solution of this problem, as of many others, is in *system*.

A census of the financial method employed in churches of the town and country will reveal the

System key to success.

most astonishing lack of any definite plan to accomplish the work at hand, or of any idea of what is really to be done. Certain it is that nothing better can be expected, until there is organized and systematized direction of the work. The question, "What system?" of course, arises at once, and must be answered in accord with the local conditions of the church. No rule can be given to fit all, but the hints in this article may help solve the problem in some places. So many patent schemes and "systems" are floating around at so much per hundred copies, that the reader, having received many such advertisements, may ask at once "Which system?" of those so alluringly offered.

The case is parallel with that of the advice to wheelmen. "In buying a bicycle get the best. Any one of the advertisements will tell you which one that is."

In truth, so many good wheels are on the market now that the manner of handling the machine is of more consequence than the name of the maker. So in church finances, it is abundantly true that the name of the system is of less consequence than the manner of its execution. Herein lies the success of method—in its administration. The best methods will fail if not worked, but good financiers have succeeded with comparatively crude methods. The whole problem of finances is one of *men*. A few good managers will make victory for a whole church. Two good solicitors will accomplish more than a whole churchful of people with no financial sense. Just one good financier, if of the right sort, may organize the forces at hand and lead them to victory, when far greater resources will not yield running expenses simply for want of efficient leadership.

Here are a few general principles that may serve as a guide to right methods of financiering in any church:

The pastor should never be the financial agent of the church. Where he allows himself to become such there is inevitable degeneration of the organic efficiency of the church. The money is very important; it is the steam that makes the engine go; but the ultimate purpose of firing-up the boiler is that the engine may pull the train. If the engineer must leave his post and shovel coal to keep up steam, not only will

A question
of men.

Pastor
never finan-
cial agent.

the engine be neglected, but there will be constant danger of a wreck. To keep the pastor working at the fire-box to keep up steam is a most expensive method, if mileage is taken into account. The pastor who is worthy his office has something else to do than attend to the detail of the work of finance committees and stewards, and the church that allows him to do this is cutting off the source of its own upbuilding—the old story of destroying the source of the golden eggs.

Church members must be taught to pay, not give, to the church. The grocer is not given the amount of his bill, he is paid for value received. Why should a Christian *give* the church that for which he has already received the highest value? The church will never cease to be a "mendicant, begging on the street corners of the world," till her people manfully and honestly pay their bills out of the substance God has given them.

This being true, it follows that *methods of indirect giving* should be vigorously discouraged. Any plan that develops the willingness of the people to pay according to their ability toward the support of the Gospel, puts the church on a sound basis. It may be compared to the development of a spring of water till it shall furnish a constantly-increasing flow adequate to all needs. But to cultivate the habit of giving in an indirect manner only when something else is received in return, is like the fall of a sud-

Pay, not
give.

Indirect
giving bad.

den shower that swells the stream for a brief time, but so chokes the spring with mud that less water flows than before. That social gatherings, suppers, lectures, picnics, entertainments, etc., have a place in the work of the church there can be little doubt. But to make these things, good themselves, the means of the financial support of the church, is another matter. The results of such management may be seen in many a church that has educated its members to feel that they cannot pay anything to the church unless they be given value received in ice-cream or turkey or music. That such "giving" is a long remove from the divine plan is not hard to show.

In *constant emphasis of proportional paying* must be the final solving of this problem. While the tenth may not be exacted as a legal obligation under the present dispensation,

Proportional paying.

it is by many conceded to be the most practical rule for the division of the personal income after operating expenses (in the case of business men and farmers) are deducted. If the tenth is not enough, or if some feel not able to pay even that amount, at least insist that some definite proportion be set aside as the Lord's money, which shall be regularly paid over to help carry on His work. Could the large majority of supporters of the church come to adopt this plan, it would mean that the solicitors and finance committee and every other officer connected with the financial management of the church could be

given an honorable discharge and go to work to, advance the spiritual interests of the church. The money would come in itself, because it is the Lord's and there is no other disposition to make of it. A treasurer would be needed to keep accounts for money expended—a duty that is sometimes not heavy under the present (lack of) system.

But not all Christians have reached the point of proportional paying. The next best thing is to *secure definite pledges* toward the church expenses. The following plan, with slight modifications, is being used successfully in many churches.

On the earliest possible day of the church year, hold a meeting of all concerned in the financial work of the church. Make out a budget of all money needed for running expenses for the ensuing year. This should include salaries of pastor, janitor and organist or chorister (if such officers are paid), light, fuel, insurance, and any incidentals that may be anticipated. Then divide the names of all members and other contributors among the solicitors, who may be any persons to whom this work is assigned.

Having received a list of names, every solicitor is instructed to call upon each person within one week and ascertain what amount he or she will pledge toward expenses, securing all pledges as far as possible on the basis of so much per week; or, in some cases, a certain sum per month. In farming

**The
one-fund
system.**

**Personal
canvass
worth all
the "round
ups."**

communities this is sometimes difficult; but the habit of paying the preacher once a year is a very bad one, both for the preacher and the payer. By some vigorous pushing, this work can be done, and nearly every member seen during the first week of the year. At the second meeting, held at the close of the week, the pledges secured may be footed up; to the sum may be added the estimated payments from those who have adopted the proportional plan, and the probable receipts from loose collections. This sum-total, when compared with the amount of the budget, will show the financial situation. Should the amount in sight not be sufficient to pay bills incurred, or should it be impossible to raise the amounts pledged in enough cases to bring up the total, then the budget must be reduced in some way. In some cases it may now be safe to allow some sub-organization to assume a part of the budget. The janitor work may be provided for by volunteer service, or other saving may be made; but in any case, keep the situation as nearly in the balance-sheet form as possible.

The advantages of the one-fund system are that it is systematic, business-like, is a relief to the pastor and keeps the entire financial interests of the church where they can be got at in short notice. Its disadvantages are that it is not possible to get as much money in one fund as in two or three. It usually

**Advantages
and disad-
vantages.**

fails where expert financiering is required, and gives the pastor no chance to save the case in extreme shortage of current expenses.

Granted that the amount pledged is sufficient for the estimated expenses the work becomes now a task of bookkeeping with an occasional collectors' visit to those who are "slow" in paying, and every bookkeeper knows that there is much in good method here. A book can be obtained from nearly any church publishing house, ruled as an individual ledger for keeping accounts with subscribers. A statement may be sent out quarterly, or oftener, to all delinquents, showing the amount pledged, amount already paid, and the amount due to date. Occasionally a statement should be made by the treasurer before the congregation of the exact state of the society's accounts. Many often suppose that the preacher has more money than he knows what to do with, when, in truth, his salary is far behind and he is in great straits on account of the deficiency.

A most helpful reminder is a large card, framed and hung in the vestibule, with a list of names of subscribers running down the column at the left. The space to the right may be ruled in fifty-two columns. If the amount pledged per week is paid—whether five cents or five dollars—a simple check mark is made in the column that week. As the same mark is made for all contributors, the record is colorless

Vestibule
ledger.

in everything except the regularity of payment of the amount pledged. Of course objection will be made by those who do not keep paid-up, but the total result is inevitably toward greater promptness of payment.

For convenience in paying the amounts pledged, the now almost universal contribution envelope is hard to improve upon. A method comes from an Eastern publisher, who offers to furnish for fifteen cents a bundle of fifty-two envelopes in a little wire basket attached to the bottom of a neat calendar, which is to be presented to every member to take home and hang in a conspicuous place as a constant reminder of the weekly pledge.

The amount of the "loose" collections may be increased and a better understanding fostered all around if a card is attached to the back of the seats, bearing an inscription like the following:

Card on
back of
seats.

THIS CHURCH IS SUPPORTED
ENTIRELY BY VOLUNTARY OFFERINGS. AS
ALL SEATS ARE FREE YOU ARE INVITED
TO CONTRIBUTE TOWARD THE
CURRENT EXPENSES

Another form is:

YOUR OFFERING.—This is a Church of the People, by the People, for the People. It is without endowment, and dependent wholly upon voluntary offerings. Will you help a little, if both able and willing? Whether able or not, ALL ARE ALIKE WELCOME. "The Lord loveth a cheerful giver." "And he that soweth bountifully shall reap also bountifully."

To the objection that this has a mercenary appearance, it may be said that it will not be taken in that sense unless the conduct of the members toward strangers is such as to suggest that newcomers are wanted only for what is got from them.

In small churches the receipts from envelopes are sometimes set apart for the pastor's salary, while the loose collections are devoted to incidental expenses. Sometimes the Ladies' Aid Society assumes certain items of the budget, which is all right, provided it does not involve the indirect methods of money-raising already referred to.

Worse than this is the seeking for money from wholly unconsecrated sources, at the expense of the moral standing of the church.

Division of funds. Many saloon men can be induced to contribute to the church, but to accept such revenue, with the implied silence concerning the iniquitous business of the giver, is certainly most reprehensible. Stories there are of Western churches in "early days" that regularly paid the preacher from the proceeds of the church dance, which "everybody" attended for the good of the cause.

Bad sources of revenue. The question of rented pews or free seats arises so rarely in the church of the town as to need no discussion here. In more than ninety-nine per cent of all churches of this class all seats are free and are likely to remain so.

The foregoing applies to the raising of money for the regular expenses of the church. Experience in thousands of churches establishes conclusively the folly of catch-penny schemes for these fixed charges. Of greater importance than the money raised is the development of financial self-reliance on the part of the church itself.

There are some interests of the church that seem to justify a more general collecting of money from the community at large.

**Justifiable
appeals
for aid.**

The erecting or rebuilding of a church or parsonage; improvements of property; payments of debt and other enterprises that substantially enhance the value of the property to the people as a whole—in such features of the work the people ought to have a part. The church looms large in the town and is regarded as belonging to the people. If the “outsider” has contributed a small sum to its building, he will feel more at home there for years after. But here let the rule concerning indirect giving be strictly adhered to. If it is necessary to keep a church member from getting into bad financial habits, it is doubly so with the man who has little personal interest in the cause.

Some ingenious devices are current for the collecting of money for any specific work of the church. A card like the following has been very successful:

**Collecting
devices.**

THE TOWN CHURCH

RING OUT THE BELL

WILL YOU GIVE A DIME TO HELP PUT A GOOD BELL
ON THE JONESVILLE BAPTIST CHURCH?

NAMES

Just to start it.....	10 cents
Certainly I will.....	10 cents
With pleasure	10 cents
I'm next, I believe.....	10 cents
Here goes	10 cents
Glad of the chance.....	10 cents
I like good company myself.....	10 cents
Couldn't refuse, you know	10 cents
Delighted to do it.....	10 cents
Put me down last.....	10 cents

Name of collector.....

A "missionary dollar" is printed and sold by Rev. G. W. Woodall, of Westport, N. Y., at fifty cents per dozen. The "dollar" is a cir-

**Missionary
dollar.**

cular card two and one-half inches in diameter, with holes to fit enough nickels and dimes to make, with a quarter in the center, one dollar. The coins are to be glued in as fast as collected. Around the edge of the "dollar" run the words, "Go ye into all the world, preach the Gospel to every creature." These devices are suited mainly to the use of children, of course; the motto of the "dollar" plan being "Something from every member of every school every year to carry the Gospel to every creature." With modifications the plan can be used for other objects. If properly used these devices are free

from objection, but if personal or social coercion are used in collecting, many evils may follow in their wake. The "mite-box" is an old device for the same end and has reaped many thousands of dollars for the causes for which it has pleaded.

Mite-boxes.

The foregoing plans are legitimate because they involve direct paying toward the cause presented. Of a different sort are those who travel with every sort of "attraction," from the stereopticon "Life of Christ" to the "refined" vaudeville artist, who wishes to enlist the support of the long-suffering pastor for his "moral" show. In all such cases, except where the mental or moral benefit is such as to make the financial consideration entirely secondary, the itinerant had better move on. It is rare, indeed, that such a venture results in anything for the church except hard work for a few, a wisdom that comes from experience, and a resolve not to do it again.

Travelling fakirs.

The desirability of a good course of lectures is discussed in another chapter, but its financial aspects may be considered here. To get the sort of man that people care to hear and ought to hear (a rare combination) is usually expensive. Yet, in organizing a course, perhaps in conjunction with some neighboring town, it is possible to make the course a financial success. Four good lectures

Financiering a lecture course.

and a local concert sold as a course of five, for one dollar, is an attractive program. Frequently one favorite will sell the whole ticket. The single admittance can be placed rather high—say thirty-five cents—thus putting a premium on the season ticket. If the course costs one dollar, and one hundred and twenty-five season-tickets are sold, the management can rest on its oars and has nothing to do after the first selling of tickets except to pay its bills. A few good canvassers can, in a short time, visit those who usually buy such tickets and secure the money to run the course in advance. By a systematic canvass from house to house, in a town of three thousand people, a course of the above sort netted one hundred and seventy-five dollars for the Ladies' Aid Society that had it in charge.

It is often proposed to give concerts or lectures free and take a collection to pay expenses. This sounds well and, in some communities, works well. But where there is a disposition to take all that can be realized, and to pay as little as possible, an unscrupulous audience may put an end to such philanthropy by refusing to pay enough to support the enterprise. A partial remedy is to announce a "collection at the door," and require each to contribute something as he passes in. The more such people pay the more they will appreciate the good things given on the program.

**Failure
of free
courses.**

The proposition that no charge should ever be made at the church door, while advocated by some good people, is not founded on any idea of Scripture nor sound reason, but on the old idea that the man's religion and his money must be kept forever separate.

**No charge
at church
door.**

A financial pest has arisen in the form of the interminable "chain-letter," the originator of which should be made to receive and answer all the letters that have been written in the carrying-out of the plan.

**Chain
letters.**

By most good people it is regarded as merely a phase of petit larceny, an opinion that is hard to controvert.

Slightly more legitimate is the plan of sending out all over the country, cards with holes in them to receive quarters or half-dollars, to be returned to the sender loaded for the payment of the local church debt, which the giver is informed is the most peculiar and innocent of any in all the country. In truth, this debt is usually the result of either bad management or gross extravagance on the part of a visionary building committee. There can be no objection to sending such beggars to one's friends if one cares to do so, but in many cases it is to be feared that the whole idea is a device to save the expense of paying one's own local church bills, and as such is certainly not to be encouraged.

**Collecting
cards.**

Such devices are usually resorted to in the case

of old debts that seem to be incurable from a local standpoint. That debt-raising is "a business by itself," may be attested by the assertion sometimes made that preachers who are noted as good debt-raisers are good for little else. The debt-raiser must be a psychologist; he must create an atmosphere of belief that the thing can be done; he must secure a good "lead"; he must find a sufficient following and the thing is done. Nine times out of ten, no one believed it could be done till it was tried. A pastor of a small church had a five-hundred-dollar debt that had hung over the church like a cloud for years. The people said it could not be paid. After a partial canvass it seemed that only three hundred dollars could be secured. The pastor, however, agreed to raise one hundred more provided the Ladies' Aid Society would assume the remaining one hundred dollars, to be paid within two years. This was done and the debt paid. Where did the pastor get the one hundred dollars that he agreed to raise? He secured it by collecting one dollar each from one hundred men who would not have given large sums, but were willing to pay one dollar to see the church out of debt.

The wise worker will say: "Better keep out of debt." Yes, by all means! Write it on the sky that wayfaring builders, though exceedingly foolish, may read and ponder. But the man who has not by bitter expe-

Debt-raising.

Keep out of debt.

rience learned this lesson for himself, will not heed it here. He who has already been singed, especially if by the fire that another before him has kindled, needs no sign, "Keep out of the fire." The rosy-hued advantages to be secured from the possession of a fine property, "even with a small incumbrance," are, in practice, always more than offset by the disheartening and enervating effects of paying interest and living at constant variance with the admonition to "owe no man anything."

CHAPTER XIX

CHURCH ADVERTISING

When we have no unchurched people, we may join in the lament that the church should "descend" to advertising as a means of getting people to hear the Gospel. Men and women ought to come to church, but if they do not, we must go after them. The Jewish people ought to have served Jehovah, but when they did not, Jesus Himself came to earth to seek and save. When the church was almost the only public institution in the community, it was not necessary to be always calling attention to its work. But this is a larger world and demands a larger church to fill it with righteousness.

The secret of all good advertising is to make people want things. The object of church advertising is to make people want to go to church. The service of the church certainly meets a fundamental need in human lives, but other matters have crowded out the church. If the services of the house of God can be sufficiently impressed upon the personal consciousness, there is little difficulty in securing attendance. This is the method

of church advertising to wake people up to the fact that the church is doing business and that they will be welcome at the old stand.

The simplest and most universal form of advertising is that of the Sunday "pulpit notices."

Pulpit notices. The advantages and demerits of the pile of innocent slips of paper that greets the pastor on entering the pulpit

have been often commented upon. The time consumed in making announcements, the impossibility of emphasizing everything, from the meeting of the flower committee, to the state temperance convention, and the fact that so few people hear anything that is said—feeling that none of these things apply to them—these and other reasons have led many pastors to seek

Church bulletin. refuge from the whole matter in a church paper, printed weekly, and containing the notices and other items

of interest. Sometimes the paper is a single sheet containing the notices, changes in membership, and subjects of sermons, only. From this it may be expanded to four or sometimes eight pages, containing the church news of the week with items of general religious interest. The expense of printing the paper is often met by advertisements. A better plan is to secure subscriptions from enough attendants to pay for the printing. This affords a much better paper and eliminates the question of Sunday advertising.

A very successful plan has been tried in some counties by which several churches of the same denomination in neighboring towns have co-operated to publish a paper representing them all. A page is devoted to each co-operating church. The edition being large and the circulation general, it is not difficult to secure enough advertisements to pay for the expense of publication, besides the interest of church news from sister churches. The same plan might be operated by churches of different names in the same town, but there would be more danger of rivalry creeping in to disturb the harmony of the management. If such a plan has succeeded it has not yet been heard from.

The mimeograph is a most valuable aid to the wide-awake pastor in the matter of advertising.

Invitations, Bible lessons, sermon outlines, Sunday programs, even the church bulletin itself have been often successfully gotten out on this device. An occasional pastor turns printer and occupies his spare time in running a small press, on which the church printing is done. Some preachers become expert "job" men, but in most cases either the printing or the preaching will suffer, though the author has known cases where the plan was a great success.

The "Year Book," while a permanent feature of the larger churches, has yet to be adopted by

those of smaller numbers. For any church of one hundred members or more, an annual manual containing lists of members, officers, committees, societies, and in some cases, additional information regarding the articles of faith, is of great value. It affords an opportunity for the members to see themselves and gain a general idea of the church in its various relations and activities. If the work is well done the organic self-respect of the church will be much increased thereby. A very neat and attractive little year book is published by a church of sixty members. Here again the everywhere present advertisement is used as a means of paying expenses. The book may be increased in value by including with the list of members those also who are attendants upon the congregation, designating the relation by an "M" or a "C" placed after each name, as the person may be a church member or only an attendant upon the congregation.

The inner motive of every sort of advertising of the services of the church is a personal invitation in some form. The strongest of all inducements is the cordial invitation extended by the lay worker to his friend or neighbor. Few people realize the possibilities of earnest and persevering work on the part of a dozen persons of tact who will use every opportunity to give an invitation to and a welcome in the service.

The Year Book.

Personal invitation.

A standing invitation may be left in every home in the town by the use of a neatly printed card large enough to hang on the wall in the living-room of the house.

Card for
distribution.

HAVE YOU A CHURCH HOME?

THE JONESVILLE METHODIST EPISCOPAL CHURCH

(Corner Ninth and C Streets)

Through extends to you a cordial invitation to attend any of the following services:

SUNDAY

Sunday School	9:30 a. m.
Morning Service	11:00 a. m.
Epworth League	6:30 p. m.
Evening Service	7:30 p. m.

WEDNESDAY

Prayer-meeting	8:00 p. m.
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FRIDAY

Singing Class	8:00 p. m.
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The pastor is in readiness at all times for any needed service.

The person distributing the cards should sign them in the blank line left for that purpose near the top. This gives a personal touch to the printed card that is valuable. If a small calendar can be attached to the card its value will be greatly increased thereby. In distributing these cards the town may be divided into districts, and workers assigned to canvass the districts, two

going together usually. Of course this affords the best of opportunities for making a census of the number of children in Sunday School, number of people who do not attend any church and other items of interest under local conditions. Five hundred calls were made in one week this way in a small town and many were found with no church home. The pastor was called upon afterward for service in cases where it was proved that the opportunity came through the cards distributed.

Five hundred calls in one week.

A variation on this plan may be made by printing a large number of cards of regular visiting-card size, as follows:

Calling Card.

SMITHVILLE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

REGULAR SERVICES

Morning Service	10:30 a. m.
Sunday School	12:30 p. m.
Y. P. S. C. E.	7:00 p. m.
Evening Service	8:00 p. m.

THURSDAY

People's Meeting 8:00 p. m.

A cordial invitation is extended to you through to attend any of these services.

J. E. EVANS, Pastor.

Again the personal element enters into the written signature of the caller on each card. Volunteers may be called for who will take packages of these cards and distribute them with a

word of endorsement in all sorts of places where there are people who ought to come to church.

No business-man would think of running a store without displaying a sign to tell the nature of his business and the name of its

**Hang out
a sign.**

proprietor, yet thousands of churches stand bare of any announcement of denomination of hours of service. The passing stranger looks in vain to see any signs that the church is alive at all, unless he happens to pass at the regular hour for public service. A neat sign, giving name of church and hours of service, is a great improvement in the business-like appearance of even a town church. Then a judiciously-used bulletin for the use of chalk may be very helpful. Should special services or subjects be under way, a new word well displayed on the board at the door may attract people who would otherwise pass by unheeding. To see the subject in black and white will increase the sense of its importance to the regular attendant also.

There are many forms of vestibule cards that are attractive if well displayed, and not left too long without change. The following

**Vestibule
invitations.**

has been used and may serve as a sample:

**"All ye are brethren; the rich and the poor meet
together."**

The seats in this church are free.

Voluntary offerings support the work.

**YOU ARE WELCOME TO A CHURCH HOME
HERE.**

The value of a personal letter is rarely understood. The busy pastor cannot write many letters, but with a good mimeograph he can send out occasional pastoral letters that may be most effective. Ten dollars spent in this way will prove a good investment indeed. Then the layman can often send a note of invitation that will bear fruit. Few people, especially in the town, are not susceptible to the delicate suggestion of deference in receipt of a personal letter of this kind. The man who has not learned the power of the pen is neglecting a mighty instrument for good.

**Personal
letters.**

The arranging of a series of sermon subjects and printing them with dates on an attractive card is a well-tried and often successful plan. If some special musical attraction can be linked with each service of the series, a large attendance may usually be secured while the series lasts. Then have some other plan ready for immediate execution. The cards may be distributed in the manner before indicated.

**Series of
subjects.**

Where effort is to be focused on the Sunday evening service, a regular card of announcement may be printed on Saturday and distributed by young men on Sunday afternoon about the town. This serves a two-fold purpose, as it also makes a job for the boys. Where the card is a regular thing for some time; the printing can be secured at reduced

**Sunday
afternoon
cards.**

rates. In preparing copy for such cards there is large opportunity for originality without becoming sensational. The cards of similar design issued by the Young Men's Christian Association will furnish many ideas on the preparation of striking and attractive invitations.

One of the most effective of all means of advertising is in the columns of the town paper.

Here the town pastor has a great advantage over his city brother, for, except in rare cases, the city editor regards church news as entirely too tame to suit the taste of his spice-fed contingent. The editor of the town paper is always glad to get such news and will usually print it in the form in which it is handed in, a concession that would be rare, indeed, in the larger city. If from day to day some item of church news can be slipped in unobtrusively, it will do much to keep the church before the people. It is needless to say that these items must be free from any personal mention of the pastor or it will immediately be said that he is "blowing his own horn." In this, as in all church advertising, the pastor cannot help figuring to some extent, but his private motto should be the three rules of the old fisherman: "1st. Keep out of sight; 2d. Keep farther out of sight; 3d. Keep still farther out of sight." Most pastors announce the regular Sunday service with subjects of sermons when they think best, but this use of the press may be vastly increased

if the pastor is a man of tact. In this, as in every item of advertising skill, there is much in perserverance. Some large business enterprises have been built up by different forms of persistent advertising before the same people, till the commodity for sale won its way to popular recognition. A study of the advertising methods of some of the established firms who make constant use of the last pages of the popular magazines, is full of suggestion to the man who will keep his work to the front and himself in touch with the world of business life. An established business will sometimes run the same advertisement for years without change, thereby giving the impression of stability of the firm. Such methods will not do for the novice. He must get the eye of the people and get it as quickly as possible.

The arrangement of attractive quarters may not be considered as advertising, but by some successful business houses the expense of such furnishings is charged to the **Attractive quarters.** advertising account. To furnish a young people's room with a few good paintings, a reading-table and curtains may not be advertising, in a strict sense of the term, but it will "draw" nevertheless, and will do much toward retaining the newcomer who chances in for a service. Expensive churches and furnishings to match are not often possible in the town church, but there is a touch of homelikeness and felt wel-

come in the very air that is far more attractive than anything that money can buy. The open heart is the most attractive thing in all the world and must be the drawing power within every form of advertising of the church, if we are to become all things to all men, and thus save some of them.

CHAPTER XX

COUNTRY EVANGELIZATION

With the concentration of social forces in the town, there is an inevitable gathering of religious forces into the town church. This brings to us a very serious problem that must be met, viz.: What is to become of the country church at the deserted cross-roads, or in the would-be town that failed to survive? What is to be done for the large population of the outlying school districts where no church exists at all?

The town church, as such, does not reach these people. Men will go much farther for sugar and clothing and news than they will go for the Gospel. Many of these churches

**Village
decay.**

have been strong organizations in the past. But the village went down, the members moved away, and the pastor gets discouraged and is sent or called to another field of labor, and the one-time watch-tower of Zion becomes part of a circuit to be supplied and dragged along as best it may. The intermittent revival is tried as a prescription and succeeds wonderfully in stirring things up, in proportion to the sensational qualities of the evangelist employed. The meeting over, a state of coma ensues that lasts till the next "effort," or till the church is closed. Once

this process sets in the discouragement becomes contagious, the "church is not what it used to be," the Saturday-night dance gets stronger and the church weaker, till from a circuit point the church becomes a preaching-place where an occasional service is held and in extreme cases the doors are nailed up and the broken windows become a ghastly monument alike to the dying church and the destructiveness of the small boy.

Western school-house. Parallel to this is the more peculiarly Western condition, where no church has ever existed, and the social life of the neighborhood, when not all drawn away to the near-by town, is centered in the schoolhouse. The population included in these communities is often larger than that of the town, yet wholly without the ministrations of church or pastor.

Meanwhile, these people are as much in need of mental and moral regeneration as any people anywhere. If the forsaken down-town districts of the cities furnish a problem in evangelization, the forsaken out-of-town districts of the country are a most pressing problem in home missions. What shall be done?

The circuit system. To equip and maintain strong independent churches has been so far impossible and will probably continue to be so in the nature of things. The circuit plan has hitherto been the main hope of these places, and through the service of many just men of whom the earth was not worthy, great good has

been done in this way. That the plan has disadvantages no one will deny. The pastor does not remain long enough in the neighborhood to become identified with the people. He becomes a sort of itinerant peddler of Gospel wares and feels that to divide his labors among three or four sets of conditions, and grapple effectively with any one of them, much less all of them, is well-nigh impossible. The pastor who measures his work by results is likely to seek a field where more concentration is possible.

A greater difficulty is the fact that the three or four districts united in the circuit have nothing in common. The lines of social affinity

**Affinity
with town.**

do not run laterally between neighborhoods, but centrally toward the town. The classes organized at different points are as far apart as though a great river flowed between, but there is a strong sense of community with the central town. The prosperous farmer counts among his friends the leading business men and his wife receives and returns calls with her town friends. The farmer feels, somehow, that the town has access to a larger life than the cross-roads, and he wishes to be counted as a part of this movement toward greater things. As a matter of fact, he is a part of the town. His news, his groceries, his law, his politics, his friends are there—and so is he, several times in a week.

Having found the difficulty we may find a remedy. Why not work with the current instead

of against it in the evangelization of the country districts? Why not, instead of trying to combine different neighborhoods at right angles to the line of social affinity, take advantage of the nature of things and combine the outlying districts with the town, whither the line of common interest runs?

Combine with the town.

To this, of course, will be objected that the town pastor has his hands full now and can do no more. As the work is now conducted

A plan of work.

this is true; but there is gain in any plan that demands the development of forces now latent. What the city mission is to the city church, the country schoolhouse is to the town church—a laboratory for the study of how to get men saved and a training-shop for workers. If the farmer and his family value their town friends, let the lay worker in the town church show himself friendly, and he will find an open door of opportunity that no man can shut. When this friendliness has taken root, let a half dozen people go out on Sunday afternoon to the old church or new schoolhouse and hold a Gospel meeting. Take some song books, a cornet if handy, some Bibles and, above all, Christian enthusiasm and manly interest in fellow men. Sing—sing much, sing heartily. Pray—pray short, pray earnestly. Read, comment, testify to helpfulness of salvation in daily life; then dismiss and get acquainted. The scattering Christians in the neighborhood will awake to new life; music and

sociability will draw others, while manly testimony will incline hearts to the Kingdom. Occasionally the town pastor can attend and preach. Visiting brethren, local preachers and others can be sent to help.

In practice, the success of every such work will center in a few faithful leaders; scarce, to be sure, but often developed in the most unexpected places. It is not to be thought that this work will run itself apart from the pastor. Back of it must be a pastor with heart and brain large enough to so direct the forces within his reach that they will push the boundaries of the Kingdom right out into the homes of the people. The twentieth-century pastor must be a leader in a new sense. He must not only lead men Godward, but he must lead them manward, till he stands as captain of the forces within reach and turns them toward the evangelization of the unoccupied territory that lies next to his own door. Such a band of workers will have many advantages over the single-handed, part-of-the-time circuit-rider.

The town church will not suffer by the process. The mission-spirit is the very core of Christian usefulness and, unless some work is conducted out *from* the church, the fire will burn low upon the altar. If we put on the pressure of responsibility we may be constantly developing new workers instead of overworking those now faithful.

The circuit-rider deserves some consideration in the readjustment of the work. The expanding work of the town is demanding *efficient* men faster than they can be supplied, and so far as any man is not efficient the sooner he leaves the pastorate the better. But there are some men peculiarly adapted to the work in country districts. To remove these would be a loss of efficiency. Such men will, in the nature of the case, succeed so well in the circuit that a change will not be needed in the places where they labor. But there is a better adjustment of these men in connection with the new work of the town church. Let the outlying districts be organized as part of the town church and let the circuit pastor serve as director of the lay forces and assistant pastor for the outer work. Two and two went the disciples in the olden time, and by twos the early itinerants founded the church of to-day.

What to do
with the
circuit
rider.

Something like the old circuit-plan, with its senior and junior preachers, may yet be the solution of the problem of country evangelization. The ready pastor will often be able to secure as assistant some consecrated person whose ability is rather as an organizer and pastor than as a preacher. There are young men who would gladly give their lives to such work, and the church frowns upon them

New
material as
assistants.

because they are not adapted to the trying and versatile work of the regular ministry. Ex-Young-Men's-Christian-Association workers, Bible students, graduates of Christian colleges and training-schools, men rescued from sin and others will be found effective under direction of the town pastor. The support of the assistant can usually be provided for among the people with whom he works, but should the central church be required to raise a hundred or two dollars a year to carry on the work, the outlay will be more than repaid in the efficiency of the new workers developed by the plan. The average pastor is at present bound to the crank of the church machinery through the week and then expected to preach on Sunday as if he had spent half his time in preparation. The new life of the pastor's sermons would alone be worth the outlay. It is true that this involves a vision of the Kingdom greater than most official members possess, but till we do get our eyes off the ground we shall never see the greater Kingdom on earth.

There is much evidence to show that the trend of things is in this direction. Many such churches now exist in different parts of the country. In the West, churches in constantly increasing number have from one to four or five outlying appointments where the pastor wedges in a service or two a month, and regrets his inability to maintain serv-

**Plan now
at work.**

ices in other points just as pressing and needy. Such preaching-places are usually regarded as necessary encumbrances, to be shifted onto some other pastor.

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